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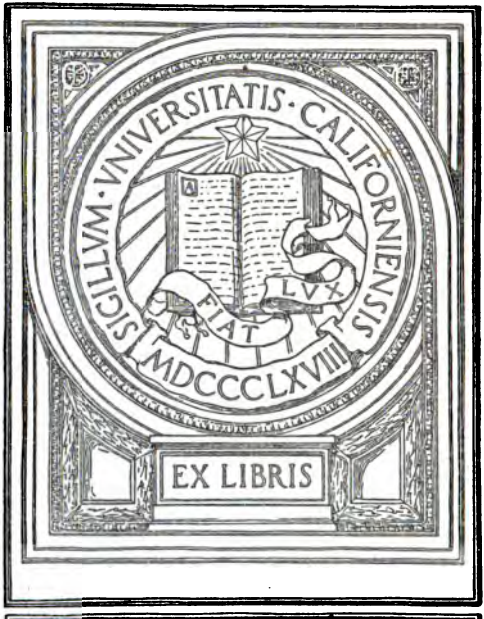
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THE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

CONFIDENTIAL

THE WOODLAND HALLS.

THE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

A Complete Edition.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY BIRKET FOSTER.

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BLOOMFIELD.

THE LIFE OF ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

> "Bloomfield, thy happy omen'd name,
> Ensures continuance to thy fame:
> Both sense and truth this verdict give,
> While fields shall bloom thy name shall live.'

VERY happy was this exclamation of Kirke White, himself one of the most genial, although most unhappy of poets, concerning an humble poet and shoemaker, whose descriptions of nature are in some respects better than those of Thomson, although they scarcely equal those of Ebenezer Elliott.

Yet, in writing a sketch of the life of Robert Bloomfield, there is somehow a void. We have not here to deal with the eccentricities of a young untrained mind, as in the case of Chatterton; there is not the intense interest about the career of this poet, as there is in some of those who struggle up from the foul noisome dens of poverty,—struggle up, and strive for immortality in common with peer or viscount, Byron or Maidstone. Yet there is an interest attaching to Bloomfield, as there is an interest attaching to most men who are self-educated, and who, although not starving, have to labour hard for their daily bread. Let us look at him in London, through his brother's eyes:—

"I have him in my mind's eye," says George Bloomfield, "a little boy; not bigger than boys generally are at twelve years old. When I met him and his mother at the inn, he strutted before us, dressed just as he came from keeping sheep, hogs, &c.—his shoes filled full of stumps in the

heels. He, looking about him, slipt up—his nails were unused to a flat pavement. I remember viewing him as he scampered up:—how small he was. Little thought that little fatherless boy would be one day known and esteemed by the most learned, the most respected, the wisest, and the best men of the kingdom."

But before we proceed to look at his poems, where he spoke for himself, it will be well to listen to the history of the "Farmer's Boy," the publication of which had so important an effect upon his career, and which may indeed be considered the keystone and substance of it.

"In November, 1798," says Mr. Lofft, "I received a MS. which I was requested to read, and to give my opinion of it. It was left for me by Mr. George Bloomfield, the brother of the author, and he had recommended it with a very modest, sensible, and candid letter. It had before been shown to some persons in London; whose indifference toward it may probably be explained when it is considered that it came to their hands under no circumstances of adventitious recommendation. With some, a person must be rich, or titled, or fashionable as a literary name, or at least fashionable in some respect, good or bad, before anything which he can offer will be thought worthy of notice.

"I had been a little accustomed to the effect of prejudices: and I was determined to judge, in the only just and reasonable way, of the work, by the work itself.

"At first, I confess, seeing it divided into the four seasons, I had to encounter a prepossession not very advantageous to any writer: that the author was treading in a path already so admirably trod by Thomson; and might be adding one more to an attempt already so often, but so injudiciously and unhappily made, of transmuting that noble poem from blank verse into rhyme;—from its own pure native gold, into an alloyed metal of incomparably less splendour, permanence, and worth.

"I had soon, however, the pleasure of finding myself relieved from that apprehension: and of discovering, that, although the delineation of rural scenery naturally

branches itself into these divisions, there was little else except the general qualities of a musical ear, flowing numbers, feeling, piety, poetic imagery, and animation, a taste for the picturesque, a true sense of the natural and pathetic, force of thought, and liveliness of imagination, which were in common between Thomson and this author. And these are qualities which whoever has the eye, the heart, the awakened intellect, and the diviner sense of the poet, which alone can deserve the name, must possess.

"But, with these general characteristics of true poetry, 'The Farmer's Boy' has, as I have said, a character of its own. It is discriminated as much as the circumstances, and habits, and situation, and ideas consequently associated, which are so widely diverse in the two authors, could make it different. Simplicity, sweetness, a natural tenderness, that *molle atque facetum* which Horace celebrates in the Eclogues of Virgil, will be found to belong to it."

"As I spent near five years with the author," says George Bloomfield, "from the time he was fourteen years and a-half old till he was turned of twenty, the most interesting time of life (I mean the time that instruction is acquired, if acquired at all), I think I am able to give a better account of him than any one can, or than he can of himself; for his modesty would not let him speak of his temper, disposition, or morals;" and we will therefore follow the brother.

Robert Bloomfield was born on the third of December, 1766, and was the son of George Bloomfield, a tailor, at Honington. His father died when he was an infant under a year old. His mother, Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Manby, was born at Brandon, 1736. She was a schoolmistress, and instructed her own children with the others. He thus learned to read as soon as he learned to speak. "Though the mother was left a widow with six small children, yet with the help of friends she managed to give each of them a little schooling. Robert was accordingly sent to Mr. Rodwell, of Ixworth, to be improved in writing: but he did not go to that school

more than two or three months, nor was ever sent to any other; his mother again marrying when Robert was about seven years old.....

"When Robert was not above eleven years old, the late Mr. W. Austin, of Sapiston, took him. And though it is customary for farmers to pay such boys only 1*s.* 6*d.* per week, yet he generously took him into the house. This relieved his mother of any other expense than only of finding him a few things to wear: and this was more than she well knew how to do.

"She wrote, therefore," Bloomfield continues, "to me and my brother Nat (then in London) to assist her; mentioning that Robert was so small of his age that Mr. Austin said he was not likely to be able to get his living by hard labour."

Bloomfield on this told his mother that if she would let him take the boy with him, he would take him, and teach him to make shoes: and Nat promised to clothe him. The mother, upon this offer, took coach and came to London with the boy: for she said, she never should have been happy if she had not put him herself into his hands.

"She charged me," he adds, "as I valued a mother's blessing, to watch over him, to set good examples for him, and never to forget that he had lost his father." He came from Mr. Austin's June 29, 1781.

Mr. G. Bloomfield then lived at Mr. Simm's, No. 7, Pitcher's-court, Bell-alley, Coleman-street. "It is customary," he continues, "in such houses as are let to poor people in London, to have light garrets fit for mechanics to work in. In the garret, where we had two turn-up beds, and five of us worked, I received little Robert.

"As we were all single men, lodgers at a shilling per week each, our beds were coarse, and all things far fron being clean and snug, like what Robert had left at Sapiston. Robert was our man to fetch all things to hand. At noon he fetched our dinners from the cook's shop: and any one of our fellow-workmen that wanted to have anything

fetched in, would send him, and assist in his work and teach him, for a recompense for his trouble.

"Every day when the boy from the public-house came for the pewter pots, and to hear what porter was wanted, he always brought the yesterday's newspaper.[1] The reading of the paper we had been used to take by turns; but after Robert came, he mostly read for us,—because his time was of least value.

"He frequently met with words that he was unacquainted with: of this he often complained. I one day happened, at a book-stall, to see a small dictionary, which had been very ill used. I bought it for him for fourpence. By the help of this he in a little time could read and comprehend the long and beautiful speeches of Burke, Fox, or North.

"One Sunday, after a whole day's stroll in the country, we by accident went into a dissenting Meeting-house in the Old Jewry, where a gentleman was lecturing. This man filled Robert with astonishment. The house was amazingly crowded with the most genteel people: and though we were forced to stand in the aisle, and were much pressed, yet Robert always quickened his steps to get into the town on a Sunday evening soon enough to attend this lecture.

"The preacher's name was Fawcet.[2] His language was just such as the 'Rambler' is written in: his action like a person acting a tragedy; his discourse rational, and free from the cant of Methodism.

"Of him Robert learned to accent what he called hard words; and otherwise improved himself; and gained the most enlarged notions of Providence.

(1) "I spoke in the former editions of the effect of newspapers, and other means of popular information; and I now say, I have no doubt that the opportunity of reading them contributed much to form the mind of the author of the 'Farmer's Boy.' Genius profits greatly by small daily aids and excitements. A wise and good government will render those aids as free and as generally accessible as it can. From such sparks not only the spirit of the future poet, but of the artist in various branches, of the future sailor and soldier, is awakened."—CAPEL LOFFT. This note was written in 1809; we of 1853 know the deep significance of the power of the press.

(2) Author of a justly-esteemed poem on War.

"He went sometimes with me to a Debating Society, at Coachmaker's-hall, but not often; and a few times to Covent-garden Theatre. These are all the opportunities he ever had to learn from public speakers. As to books, he had to wade through two or three folios: an History of England, British Traveller, and a Geography. But he always read them as a task, or to oblige us who bought them. And as they came in sixpenny numbers weekly, he had about as many hours to read as other boys spend in play.

"I at that time read the 'London Magazine:' and in that work about two sheets were set apart for a review; Robert seemed always eager to read this review. Here he could see what the literary men were doing, and learn how to judge of the merits of the works that came out. And I observed that he always looked at the Poet's Corner. And one day he repeated a 'Song' which he composed to an old tune. I was much surprised that he should make so smooth verses: so I persuaded him to try whether the editor of our paper would give them a place in Poet's Corner. He succeeded, and they were printed. And as I forget his other early productions, I shall copy this.

A VILLAGE GIRL.

HAIL, May! lovely May! how replenish'd my pails,
The young dawn o'erspreads the broad east, streak'd with gold!
My glad heart beats time to the laugh of the vales,
And Colin's voice rings through the wood from the fold.

The wood to the mountain submissively bends,
Whose blue misty summit first glows with the sun!
See! thence a gay train by the wild rill descends
To join the mix'd sports:—Hark! the tumult 's begun.

Be cloudless, ye skies!—And be Colin but there;
Not dew-spangled bents on the wide level dale,
Nor morning's first smile can more lovely appear
Than his looks, since my wishes I cannot conceal.

Swift down the mad dance, whilst blest health prompts to move,
We'll count joys to come, and exchange vows of truth;
And haply, when age cools the transports of love,
Decry, like good folks, the vain follies of youth.

R. B.[1]

(1) Copied by the author from *Say's Gazetteer*, 24th May, 1806. Mr. B. observes the printer had changed "count" to "court."—C. L.

"I remember," says Bloomfield, continuing his narrative, "a little piece which he called 'The Sailor's Return:' in which he tried to describe the feelings of an honest *tar*, who, after a long absence, saw his dear native village first rising into view. This too obtained a place in the Poet's Corner. And, as he was so young," his brother proceeds, "it shows some genius in him, and some industry, to have acquired so much knowledge of the use of words in so little time. Indeed, at this time, myself and fellow-workmen in the garret began to get instructions from him.

"About this time there came a man to lodge at our lodgings that was troubled with fits. Robert was so much hurt to see this poor creature drawn into such frightful forms, and to hear his horrid screams, that I was forced to leave the lodging. We went to Blue Hart-court, Bell-alley. In our new garret we found a singular character, James Kay, a native of Dundee. He was a middle-aged man, of a good understanding, and yet a furious Calvinist. He had many books,—and some which he did not value; such as the 'Seasons,' 'Paradise Lost,' and some novels. These books he lent to Robert; who spent all his leisure hours in reading the 'Seasons,' which he was now capable of reading. I never heard him give so much praise to any book as to that.

"I think it was in the year 1784 that the question came to be decided between the journeymen shoemakers,—whether those who had learned without serving an apprenticeship could follow the trade?

"The man by whom Robert and I were employed, Mr. Chamberlayne, of Cheapside, took an active part against the lawful journeymen; and even went so far as to pay off every man that worked for him that had joined their clubs. This so exasperated the men, that their acting committee soon looked for unlawful men (as they called them) among Chamberlayne's workmen."

Robert was found out, and Chamberlayne was threatened with a prosecution for employing him, and his brother George for teaching him. Chamberlayne requested the

brother to proceed, and bring it to trial; for he would defend it, and neither George nor Robert should be annoyed.

Meantime George refused to join those who called themselves, exclusively, the Lawful Crafts. George, who was never famed for patience, took his pen, and addressed a letter to one of the committee, a man of very bad character. In this, after reiterating that he took Robert at his mother's request, he "made free," as Lofft observes, "as well with the private character of this man as with the views of the committee." "This," says George, "was very foolish; for it made things worse: but I felt too much to refrain.

"Robert, naturally fond of peace, and fearful for my personal safety, begged to be suffered to retire from the storm.

"He came home; and Mr. Austin kindly bade him take his house for his home till he could return to me. And here, with his mind glowing with the fine descriptions of rural scenery which he found in 'Thomson's Seasons,' he again retraced the very fields where he first began to think. Here, free from the smoke, the noise, the contention of the city, he imbibed that love of rural simplicity and rural innocence, which fitted him, in a great degree, to be the writer of such a thing as 'The Farmer's Boy.'

"Here he lived two months. At length, as the dispute in the trade still remained undecided, Mr. Dudbridge offered to take Robert apprentice, to secure him, at all events, from any consequences of the litigation....

"When I left London, he was turned of twenty: and much of my happiness since has arisen from a constant correspondence which I have held with him.

"After I left him, he studied music, and was a good player on the violin.

"But as my brother Nat had married a Woolwich woman, it happened that Robert took a fancy to Mary Anne Church, a comely young woman of that town, whose father is a boat-builder in the government yard there. He married 12th December, 1790.

"Soon after he married, Robert told me, in a letter, that he had sold his fiddle, and got a wife.' Like most poor men, he got a wife first, and had to get household stuff afterward. It took him some time to get out of ready-furnished lodgings. At length, by hard working, &c. he acquired a bed of his own, and hired the room up one pair of stairs, at 14, Bell-alley, Coleman-street. The landlord kindly gave him leave to sit and work in the light garret, two pair of stairs higher.

"In this garret, amid six or seven other workmen, his active mind employed itself in composing 'The Farmer's Boy.'

"In my correspondence I have seen several poetical effusions of his, all of them of a good moral tendency; but which he very likely would think do him little credit: on that account I have not preserved them.

"Robert is a Ladies' Shoemaker, and works for Mr Davies, Lombard-street. He is of a slender make; of about five feet four inches high; very dark complexion. His mother, who is a very religious member of the Church of England, took all the pains she could in his infancy to make him pious; and, as his reason expanded, his love of God and man increased with it. I never knew his fellow for mildness of temper and goodness of disposition. And since I left him, universally is he praised by those who knew him best, for the best of husbands, an indulgent father, and quiet neighbour. He is between thirty-three and four years old, and has three children;" two daughters and a son.

Mr. George Bloomfield concludes this clear, affectionate, and interesting narrative, by a very kind address to Capel Lofft. "But pleased as I am," says the latter, "with the good opinion of a man like him, I must not take praise to myself for not having neglected or suppressed such a work when it came into my hands. And I have no further merit than that of seeing what it was impossible for an unprejudiced mind not to see, and of doing what it was impossible not to do.

"But I join with him cordially in his prayer, 'that God, the giver of thought, may, as mental light spreads, raise up many who will turn a listening ear, and will not despise

'The short and simple annals of the poor.'

"Very few words will complete what remains to be added, as to the circumstances which led to the publication of 'The Farmer's Boy.'

"Struck with the work, but not less struck with the remark, which is become a proverb, of the Roman satirist, that 'it is not easy[1] for those to emerge to notice whose circumstances obscure the observation of their merits,' I sent it to a friend, whom I knew to be above these prejudices: and who has deserved, and is deserving, well of the public, in many other instances, by his attention to literature and the elegant arts. He immediately expressed a high satisfaction in it; and communicated it to the publishers. They adopted it upon terms honourable to themselves, and satisfactory to the author, and to me in his behalf.

"My part has been this, and it has been a very pleasing one: to revise the MS., making occasionally corrections with respect to orthography, and sometimes in the grammatical construction. The corrections, in point of grammar, reduce themselves almost wholly to a circumstance of provincial usage, which even well-educated persons in Suffolk and Norfolk do not wholly avoid; and which may be said, as to general custom, to have become in these counties almost an established dialect,—that of adopting the plural for the singular termination of verbs, so as to exclude the *s*. But not a line is added or substantially altered through the whole poem.

"The proofs have gone through my hands. It has been printed slowly, because most carefully, as it deserved to be printed.

(1) Haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi.—Juv.

"I have no doubt of its reception with the public; I have none of its going down to posterity with honour: which is not always the fate of productions which are popular in their day.

"Thus much I know, that the author, with a spirit amiable at all times, and which would have been revered by antiquity, seemed far less interested concerning any fame or advantage he may derive from it to himself, than in the pleasure of giving a printed copy of it, as a tribute of duty and affection, to his mother; in whose pleasure, should it succeed, his filial heart placed the gratification of which it was most desirous. It is much to be a poet, such as he will be found; it is more to be such a man."

As "The Farmer's Boy" was that poem which established the fame of Bloomfield, so is it also his first and best. I shall not in this place enter into any comparison between the works of Thomson and Bloomfield, and that for two reasons: first, because it has been so admirably done by Dr. Drake; and secondly, because the subject is perhaps more fitting for the cursory glance at pastoral poetry which I have given in the Life of Thomson.

Sufficient for our present purpose will be the remarks of a genial and excellent critic:[1]—

"From the pleasing duty of describing such a character," (meaning the personal character of Mr. Bloomfield,) "let us now turn our attention to the species of composition of which his poem is so perfect a specimen. It has been observed, in my sixteenth number, that pastoral poetry in this country, with very few exceptions, has exhibited a tame and servile adherence to classical imagery and costume; at the same time totally overlooking that profusion of picturesque beauty, and that originality of manner and peculiarity of employment, which our climate and our rustics everywhere present.

"A few authors were formerly mentioned as having judiciously deviated from the customary plan; to these may now be added the name of Bloomfield,—the 'Farmer's

(1) Drake's "Literary Hours," vol. ii. Ess. xxxix. p. 444.

Boy,' though not assuming the form of an eclogue, being peculiarly and exclusively, throughout, a pastoral composition; not, like the poem of Thomson, taking a wide excursion through all the phenomena of the seasons, but nearly limited to the rural occupation and business of the fields, the dairy, and the farm-yard.

"As with these employments, however, the vicissitudes of the year are immediately and necessarily connected, Mr. Bloomfield has, with propriety, divided his poem into four books, affixing to those books the titles of the seasons.

"Such, indeed, are the merits of this work, that in true pastoral imagery and simplicity I do not think any production can be put in competition with it since the days of Theocritus.

"To that charming simplicity which particularizes the Grecian, are added the individuality, fidelity, and boldness of description, which render Thomson so interesting to the lovers of nature.

"Gessner possesses the most engaging sentiment, and the most refined simplicity of manners; but he wants that rustic wildness and *naïveté* in delineation characteristic of the Sicilian, and of the composition before us.

"Warner and Drayton have much to recommend them; but they are very unequal, and are devoid of the sweet and pensive morality which pervades almost every page of the 'Farmer's Boy;' nor can they establish any pretensions to that fecundity in painting the economy of rural life which this poem, drawn from actual experience, so richly displays.

"It is astonishing, indeed, what various and striking circumstances, peculiar to the occupation of the British farmer, and which are adapted to all the purposes of the pastoral muse, had escaped our poets, previous to the publication of Mr. Bloomfield's work.

"Those who are partial to the country;—and where is the man of genius who feels not a delight approaching to ecstasy from the contemplation of its scenery, and the

happiness which its cultivation diffuses?—those who have paid attention to the process of husbandry, and who view its occurrences with interest; who are at the same time alive to all the minutiæ of the animal and vegetable creation; who mark

> 'How Nature paints her colours, how the bee
> Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet;'

will derive from the study of this poem a gratification the most permanent and pure."

Again, he says: "I am well aware that smooth and flowing lines are of easy purchase, and the property of almost every poetaster of the day: but the versification of Mr. Bloomfield is of another character; it displays beauties of the most positive kind, and those witcheries of expression which are only to be acquired by the united efforts of genius and study.

"The general characteristics of his versification are facility and sweetness; that ease which is, in fact, the result of unremitted labour, and one of the most valuable acquisitions of literature. It displays occasionally, likewise, a vigour and a brilliancy of polish that might endure comparison with the high-wrought texture of the muse of Darwin. From the nature of his subject, however, this splendid mode of decoration could be used but with a sparing hand: and it is not one of his least merits that his diction and harmony should so admirably correspond with the scene which he has chosen.

"To excel," Dr. Drake continues, "in rural imagery, it is necessary that the poet should diligently study nature for himself; and not peruse her, as is but too common, 'through the spectacles of books.' He should trace her in all her windings, in her deepest recesses, in all her varied forms. It was thus that Lucretius and Virgil, that Thomson and Cowper were enabled to unfold their scenery with such distinctness and truth; and on this plan, while wandering through his native fields, attentive to each, rural sight, each rural sound,' has Mr. Bloomfield built his charming poem.

"It is a work which proves how inexhaustible are the features of the world we inhabit: how from objects which the mass of mankind is daily accustomed to pass with indifference and neglect, genius can still produce pictures the most fascinating, and of the most interesting tendency. For it is not to imagery alone, though such as here depicted might ensure the meed of fame, that the 'Farmer's Boy' will owe its value with us and with posterity. A morality the most pathetic and pure, the feelings of a heart alive to all the tenderest duties of humanity and religion, consecrate its glowing landscapes, and shed an interest over them, a spirit of devotion, that calm and rational delight which the goodness and greatness of the Creator ought ever to inspire."

He says, in his third and last Essay: "From the review we have now taken of the 'Farmer's Boy,' it will be evident, I think, that, owing to its harmony and sweetness of versification, its benevolence of sentiment, and originality of imagery, it is entitled to rank very high in the class of descriptive and pastoral poetry."

Of the later events of his life it is scarcely necessary to speak. Much of its even tenor may be guessed from his prefaces, equable and simple in form and tone. We have rather in Bloomfield to admire the steadfastness with which he retained a position to which circumstances and his own genius had assisted him, than to follow his steps through life. *His* life, as is the life of most poets, is written in his poems; there we seek and find him. Thus I say whatever there is of good and worthy in Bloomfield, and not evanescent, is here.

ON REVISITING THE PLACE OF MY NATIVITY.

THOUGH Winter's frowns had damp'd the beaming eye,
Through twelve successive Summers heav'd the sigh,
The unaccomplish'd wish was still the same;
Till May in new and sudden glories came!
My heart was roused; and Fancy on the wing,
Thus heard the language of enchanting Spring:—
"Come to thy native groves and fruitful fields!
Thou know'st the fragrance that the wild-flow'r yields;
Inhale the breeze that bends the purple bud
And plays along the margin of the wood.
I've cloth'd them all; the very woods where thou
In infancy learn'd'st praise from every bough.
Wouldst thou behold again the vernal day?
My reign is short;—this instant come away;
Ere Philomel shall silent meet the morn;
She hails the green, but not the rip'ning corn.
Come, ere the pastures lose their yellow flow'rs:
Come now; with heart as jocund as the hours."
Who could resist the call?—that Giles had done,
Nor heard the birds, nor seen the rising sun;
Had not Benevolence, with cheering ray,
And Greatness stoop'd, indulgent to display
Praise which does surely not to Giles belong,
But to the objects that inspired his song.
Immediate pleasure from those praises flow'd;
Remoter bliss within his bosom glow'd!
Now tasted all:—for I have heard and seen
The long-remember'd voice, the church, the green;—
And oft by Friendship's gentle hand been led
Where many a hospitable board was spread.
These would I name—but each and all can feel
What the full heart would willingly reveal:

Nor needs be told; that at each season's birth,
Still the enamell'd, or the scorching earth
Gave, as each morn or weary night would come,
Ideal sweetness to my distant home:
Ideal now no more;—for, to my view
Spring's promise rose, how admirably true!
The early chorus of the cheerful grove
Gave point to gratitude, and fire to love.
O Memory! shield me from the world's poor strife;
And give those scenes thine everlasting life!

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

London,
May 30, 1800.

THE FARMER'S BOY

SPRING.[1]

ARGUMENT.

Invocation, &c.—Seed-time.—Harrowing —Morning walks.—Milking.—The Dairy.—Suffolk Cheese.—Spring coming forth.—Sheep fond of changing.—Lambs at play.—The Butcher, &c.

O COME, blest Spirit! whatsoe'er thou art,
Thou kindling warmth that hover'st[2] round my heart,
Sweet inmate, hail! thou source of sterling joy,
That Poverty itself cannot destroy,
Be thou my Muse; and faithful still to me,
Retrace the paths of wild obscurity.
No deeds of arms my humble lines[3] rehearse;
No Alpine wonders thunder through my verse,[4]
The roaring cataract, the snow-topt hill,
Inspiring awe, till breath itself stands still:
Nature's sublimer scenes ne'er charm'd mine eyes,
Nor Science led me through the boundless skies;
From meaner objects far my raptures flow;
O point these[5] raptures! bid my bosom flow!
And lead my soul to ecstasies of praise
For all the blessings of my infant days!
Bear me through regions where gay Fancy dwells,
But mould to Truth's fair form what Memory tells.

Live, trifling incidents, and grace my song,
That to the humblest menial belong:

(1) There being some variations from the first edition throughout the poem, from the MS. draft, I have thought it good to give them, for the sake of completeness.

(2) MS. hover. (3) MS. lowly tale.

(4) This I conceive to be a direct allusion to Thomson, whose fondness for describing a storm is very evident in his poems. It is very refreshing to find this promise so immediately at the commencement.

(5) MS. those

To him whose drudgery unheeded goes,
His joys unreckon'd as his cares or woes;
Though joys and cares in every path are sown,
And youthful minds have feelings of their own,[1]
Quick springing sorrows transient as the dew,
Delights from trifles, trifles ever new.
'Twas thus with Giles: meek, fatherless, and poor:
Labour his portion, but he felt no more;
No stripes, no tyranny his steps pursued;
His life was constant, cheerful servitude:
Strange to the world, he wore a bashful look,
The fields his study, Nature was his book;
And, as revolving seasons changed the scene
From heat to cold, tempestuous to serene,
Though every change still varied his employ,
Yet each new duty brought its share of joy.

Where noble Grafton spreads his rich domains,
Round Euston's water'd vale, and sloping plains,
Where woods and groves in solemn grandeur rise,
Where the kite brooding unmolested flies,
The woodcock and the painted pheasant race,
And skulking foxes, destined for the chase;
There Giles, untaught and unrepining stray'd
Through every copse, and grove, and winding glade;
There his first thoughts to Nature's charms inclin'd,
That stamps devotion on the' inquiring mind.
A little farm his generous master till'd,
Who with peculiar grace his station fill'd;
By deeds of hospitality endear'd
Served from affection, for his worth rever'd;
A happy offspring blest his plenteous board,
His fields were fruitful, and his barns well stor'd,
And fourscore ewes he fed (a sturdy team);
And lowing kine that graz'd beside the stream:
Unceasing Industry he kept in view;
And never lack'd a job for Giles to do.

Fled now the sullen murmurs of the North,
The splendid raiment of the Spring peeps forth;

(1) There is a similar idea in Kirke White:—

"There are, who think that childhood does not share
With age the cup, the bitter cup of care:
Alas! they know not this unhappy truth,
That every age and rank is born to ruth."

Her universal green, and the clear sky,
Delight still more and more the gazing eye.
Wide o'er the fields, in rising moisture strong,
Shoots up the simple flower, or creeps along
The mellow'd soil; imbibing fairer hues,
Or sweets from frequent showers and evening dews;
That summon[1] from their sheds the slumb'ring ploughs,[2]
While health impregnates every breeze that blows.[3]
No wheels support the diving, pointed share;
No groaning ox is doom'd to labour there;
No helpmates teach the docile steed his road;
(Alike unknown the plough-boy and the goad;)
But, unassisted through each toilsome day,
With smiling brow the ploughman cleaves his way,
Draws his fresh parallels, and, wid'ning still,
Treads slow the heavy dale, or climbs the hill:
Strong on the wing his busy followers play,
Where writhing earth-worms meet the unwelcome day;
Till all is changed, and hill and level down
Assume a livery of a sober brown;
Again disturb'd, when Giles with wearying strides
From ridge to ridge the ponderous harrow guides;
His heels deep sinking every step he goes,
Till dirt adhesive loads his clouted shoes.
Welcome green headland! firm beneath his feet;
Welcome the friendly bank's refreshing seat;
There, warm with toil, his panting horses browse
Their shelt'ring canopy of pendent boughs;
Till Rest delicious chase each transient pain,
And new-born Vigour swell in every vein.
Hour after hour, and day to day succeeds;
Till every clod and deep-drawn furrow spreads
To crumbling mould; a level surface clear,
And strew'd with corn to crown the rising year;
And o'er the whole Giles once transverse[4] again,
In earth's moist bosom buries up the grain.
The work is done; no more to Man is given;
The grateful Farmer trusts the rest to Heaven.
Yet oft with anxious heart he looks around,
And marks the first green blade that breaks[5] the ground;
In fancy sees his trembling oats uprun,
His tufted barley yellow with the sun;

(1) MS. summons. (2) MS. plough. (3) MS. blow.
(4) MS. traverse once. (5) MS. pierce.

Sees clouds propitious shed their timely store,
And all his harvest gather'd round his door.
But still unsafe the big swoln grain below,
A fav'rite morsel with the rook and crow;[1]

(1) In these verses, which have much of picturesque, there is a severe charge against rooks and crows, as very formidable depredators; and their destruction, as such, seems to be recommended. Such was the prevalent opinion some years back. It is less general now: and I am sure the humanity of the author, and his benevolence to animals in general, will dispose him to rejoice in whatever plea can be offered in stay of execution of this sentence. And yet more so, if it shall appear that rooks, at least, deserve not only mercy, but protection and encouragement, from the farmer.

I shall quote a passage from Bewick's interesting "History of Birds:" the narrative part of which is often as full of information as the embellishments cut in wood are beautiful. It is this:—

Speaking of birds of the Pie-kind in general, he says: "Birds of this kind * are found in every part of the known world, from Greenland to the Cape of Good Hope. In many respects they may be said to be of singular benefit to mankind: principally by destroying great quantities of noxious insects, worms, and reptiles. Rooks, in particular, are fond of the erucæ of the hedge-chaffer, or chestnut brown-beetle; for which they search with indefatigable pains. These insects," he adds in a note, "appear in hot weather in formidable numbers; disrobing the fields and trees of their verdure, blossoms, and fruit; spreading desolation and destruction wherever they go. They appeared in great numbers in Ireland during a hot summer, and committed great ravages. In the year 1747 whole meadows and corn-fields were destroyed by them in Suffolk. The decrease of rookeries in that county was thought to be the occasion of it. The many rookeries with us is in some measure the reason why we have so few of those destructive animals.†

"Rooks," he subjoins, "are often accused of feeding on the corn just after it has been sown, and various contrivances have been made both to kill and frighten them away; but, in our estimation, the advantages derived from the destruction which they make among grubs, earth-worms, and noxious insects of various kinds, will greatly overpay the injury done to the future harvest by the small quantity of corn they may destroy in searching after their favourite food.‡

"In general they are sagacious, active, and faithful to each other. They live in pairs; and their mutual attachment is constant. They are a clamorous race; mostly build in trees, and form a kind of society, of which there appears something like a regular government. A sentinel watches for the general safety, and gives notice on the appearance of danger."

Under the title "Rooks" (p. 71), Mr. Bewick repeats his observations on the useful property of this bird.

I confess myself solicitous for their safety and kind treatment. We have two which were lamed by being blown down in a storm (a calamity which destroys great numbers almost every spring). One of them is perfectly domesticated. The other is yet more remarkable; since, although enjoying his natural liberty completely, he recognises, even in his flights at a distance from the house, his adopted home, his human friends, and early protectors.§

The

* Page 63. † Wallis's "History of Northumberland."

‡ Mr. Bewick does not seem to have been quite aware that much of the mischief, as I have been informed by a sensible neighbouring farmer and tenant, is done in the grub-state of the chaffer, by biting through the roots of grass, &c.: a latent and imperceptibly, but rapidly spreading mischief, against which the rooks, and birds of similar instinct, are in a manner, the sole protection.—C. L.

§ I am fearful that they have both been shot this year. One yet tamer than either was drowned.—Nov. 1802. C. L.

From field to field the flock increasing goes;
To level crops most formidable foes:
Their danger well the wary plunderers know,
And place a watch on some conspicuous bough;
Yet oft the skulking gunner by surprise
Will scatter death amongst them as they rise.
These, hung in triumph round the spacious field,
At best will but a short-lived terror yield:
Nor guards of property: (not penal law,
But harmless riflemen of rags and straw;)
Familiarised to these, they boldly rove,
Nor heed such [1] sentinels that never move.
Let then your birds lie prostrate on the earth,
In dying posture, and with wings stretch'd forth;
Shift them at eve or morn from place to place,
And Death shall terrify the pilfering race;
In the mid air, while circling round and round,
They call their lifeless comrades from the ground;
With quick'ning wing, and notes of loud alarm,
Warn the whole flock to shun the' impending harm.

This task had Giles, in fields remote from home:
Oft has he wish'd the rosy morn to come:
Yet never famed was he nor foremost found
To break the seal of sleep; his sleep was sound:
But, when at day-break summon'd from his bed,
Light as the lark that caroll'd o'er his head.—
His sandy way, deep-worn by hasty showers,
O'er-arch'd with oaks that form'd fantastic bow'rs
Waving aloft their tow'ring branches proud,
In borrow'd tinges from the eastern cloud,
Gave [2] inspiration, pure as ever flow'd,
And genuine transport in his bosom glow'd.
His own shrill matin join'd the various notes
Of Nature's music, from a thousand throats:
The blackbird strove with emulation sweet,
And echo answer'd from her close retreat;
The sporting white-throat on some twig's end borne,
Pour'd hymns to freedom and the rising morn;

The rook is certainly a very beautiful and very sensible bird; very confiding, and very much attached. It will give me a pleasure, in which I doubt not that the author of this delightful poem will partake, if anything here said shall avail them with the farmer: and especially with the Suffolk farmer.—C. L.

(1) MS. a. (2) So in the MS.; in some editions we find *whence*.

Stopp'd in her song perchance the starting thrush,
Shook a white [1] shower from the blackthorn bush,
Where dew-drops thick as early blossoms hung,
And trembled as the minstrel sweetly sung.
Across his path, in either grove to hide,
The timid rabbit scouted by his side;
Or pheasant boldly stalk'd along the road,
Whose gold and purple tints alternate glow'd.

But groves no farther fenced the devious way;
A wide-extended heath before him lay,
Where on the grass the stagnant shower had run,
And shone a mirror to the rising sun,
Thus doubly seen to light [2] a distant wood,
To give [3] new life to each expanding bud;
And chase away the dewy foot-marks found,
Where prowling Reynard trod his nightly round;
To shun whose thefts 'twas Giles's evening care,
His feather'd victims to suspend in air,
High on the [4] bough that nodded o'er his head,
And thus each morn to strew the field with dead.

His simple errand done, he [5] homeward hies;
Another instantly its place supplies.
The chatt'ring dairy-maid immersed in steam,
Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream,
Bawls out, "Go fetch the Cows!"—he hears no more;
For pigs, and ducks, and turkeys, throng the door,
And sitting hens, for constant war prepared;
A concert strange to that which late he heard.
Straight to the meadow then he whistling goes;
With well-known halloo calls his lazy cows;
Down the rich pasture heedlessly they graze,
Or hear the summon with an idle gaze:
For well they know the cow-yard yields no more
Its tempting fragrance, nor its wintry store.
Reluctance marks their steps, sedate and slow;
The right of conquest all the law they know;
The strong press on, the weak by turns succeed,[6]
And one superior always takes the lead,

(1) MS. bright. (2) MS. to clear; first ed. lighting.
(3) MS. And give; first ed. giving.
(4) MS. a. (5) MS. Giles.
(6) This line originally ran—
"Subordinate they one by one succeed."

Is ever foremost, wheresoe'er they stray ;
Allow'd precedence, undisputed sway :[1]
With jealous pride her station is maintain'd,
For many a broil that post of honour gain'd.
At home the yard affords a grateful scene ;
For Spring makes e'en a miry cow-yard clean;
Thence from its chalky bed behold convey'd
The rich manure that drenching Winter made,
Which [2] piled near home, grows green with many a weed,
A promised nutriment for Autumn's seed.
Forth comes the maid, and like the morning smiles ;
The mistress too, and follow'd close by Giles.
A friendly tripod forms their humble seat.
With pails bright scour'd, and delicately sweet.
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,
Begins the work, begins the simple lay ;
The full-charged udder yields its willing streams,
While Mary sings some lover's amorous dreams ;
And crouching Giles beneath a neighbouring tree
Tugs o'er his pail and chants with equal glee;
Whose hat with tatter'd brim, of nap so bare,
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade,
An unambitious, peaceable cockade.
As unambitious too that cheerful aid
The mistress yields beside her rosy maid;
With joy she views her plenteous reeking store,
And bears a brimmer to the dairy door;
Her cows dismiss'd, the luscious mead to roam,
Till eve again recal them loaded home.
And now the Dairy claims her choicest care,
And half her household find employment there:
Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream
At once foregoes its quality and name:
From knotty particles first floating wide
Congealing butter 's dash'd from side to side ;
Streams of new milk [3] through flowing coolers stray,
And snow-white curd abounds, and wholesome whey.
Due north the' unglaz'd windows, cold and clear,
For warming sunbeams are unwelcome here.

(1) I have seen a similar remark in a description of Switzerland.—L See an account of a favourite cow, called Kidley, in the "Autobiography of a Working-man."

(2) MS. And.

(3) MS. New milk around.

Brisk goes the work beneath each busy hand,
And Giles must trudge, whoever gives command;
A Gibeonite, that serves them all by turns:
He drains the pump, from him the faggot burns;
From him the noisy hogs demand their food;
While at his heels run many a chirping brood,
Or down his path in expectation stand,
With equal claims upon his strewing hand.
Thus wastes the morn, till each with pleasure sees
The bustle o'er, and press'd the new-made cheese.

Unrivall'd stands thy country cheese, O Giles!
Whose very name alone engenders smiles;
Whose fame abroad by every tongue is spoke,
The well-known butt of many a flinty joke,
That pass like current coin the nation through;
And, ah! Experience proves the satire true.
Provision's grave, thou ever-craving mart,
Dependent, huge metropolis! where Art
Her poring thousands stows in breathless rooms,
Midst pois'nous smokes and steams, and rattling looms;
Where Grandeur revels in unbounded stores;
Restraint, a slighted stranger at their doors!
Thou, like a whirlpool, drain'st the countries round,
Till London market, London price, resound
Through every town, round every passing load,
And dairy produce throngs the eastern road:
Delicious veal, and butter, every hour,
From Essex lowlands, and the banks of Stour;
And further far, where numerous herds repose,
From Orwell's brink, from Waveny, or[1] Ouse.
Hence Suffolk dairy-wives run mad for cream,
And leave their milk with nothing but its name;
Its name derision and reproach pursue,
And strangers tell of "three times skimm'd sky-blue."
To cheese converted, what can be its boast?
What, but the common virtues of a post!
If drought o'ertake it faster than the knife,
Most fair it bids for stubborn length of life,
And like the oaken shelf whereon 'tis laid,
Mocks the weak efforts of the bending blade;
Or in the hog-trough rests in perfect spite,
Too big to swallow, and too hard to bite.

(1) MS and.

Inglorious victory! Ye Cheshire meads,
Or Severn's flow'ry dales, where Plenty treads,
Was your rich milk to suffer wrongs like these,
Farewell your pride! farewell renowned cheese!
The skimmer dread, whose ravages alone
Thus turn the meads' sweet nectar into stone.

Neglected now the early daisy lies;
Nor thou, pale primrose, bloom'st the only prize:
Advancing Spring profusely spreads abroad
Flowers of all hues, with sweetest fragrance stored;
Where'er she treads Love gladdens every plain,
Delight on tiptoe bears her lucid train;
Sweet Hope with conscious brow before her flies,
Anticipating wealth from Summer skies;
All Nature feels her renovating sway;
The sheep-fed pasture, and the meadow gay;
And trees, and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
Display the new-grown branch of lighter green;
On airy downs the idling shepherd lies,
And sees to-morrow in the marbled skies.
Here then, my soul, thy darling theme pursue,
For every day was Giles a shepherd too.

Small was his charge: no wilds had they to roam;
But bright enclosures circling round their home.
No yellow-blossom'd furze, nor stubborn thorn,
The heath's rough produce, had their fleeces torn;
Yet ever roving, ever seeking thee,
Enchanting spirit, dear Variety!
O happy tenants, prisoners of a day!
Released to ease, to pleasure, and to play;
Indulged through every field by turns to range,
And taste them all in one continual change.
For though luxuriant their grassy food,
Sheep long confined but loathe the present good;
Bleating around the homeward gate they meet,
And starve, and pine, with plenty at their feet.
Loosed from the winding lane, a joyful throng,
See, o'er yon pasture, how they pour along!
Giles round their boundaries takes his usual stroll;
Sees every pass secured, and fences whole;
High fences, proud to charm the gazing eye,
Where many a nestling first essays to fly;

Where blows the woodbine, faintly streak'd with red,
And rests on every bough its tender head;
Round the young ash its twining branches meet,
Or crown the hawthorn with its odour sweet.

Say, ye that know, ye who have felt and seen
Spring's morning smiles, and soul enliv'ning green,
Say, did you give the thrilling transport way?
Did your eye brighten, when young lambs at play
Leap'd o'er your path with animated pride,
Or gazed in merry clusters by your side?
Ye who can smile, to wisdom no disgrace,
At the arch meaning of a kitten's face:
If spotless innocence, and infant mirth,
Excites to praise, or gives reflection birth;
In shades like these pursue your fav'rite joy,
Midst Nature's revels, sports that never cloy.

A few begin a short but vig'rous race,
And Indolence abash'd soon flies the place;
Thus challenged forth, see thither one by one,
From every side assembling playmates run;
A thousand wily antics mark their stay,
A starting crowd, impatient of delay.
Like the fond dove from fearful prison freed,
Each seems to say, "Come, let us try our speed;"
Away they scour, impetuous, ardent, strong,
The green turf trembling as they bound along;
Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,
Where every molehill is a bed of thyme;
There panting stop; yet scarcely can refrain:
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again;
Or, if a gale with strength unusual blow,
Scatt'ring the wild-brier roses into snow,
Their little limbs increasing efforts try,
Like the torn flower the fair assemblage fly.
Ah, fallen rose! sad emblem of their doom;
Frail as thyself, they perish as they bloom!
Though unoffending Innocence may plead,
Though frantic ewes may mourn the savage deed,
Their shepherd comes, a messenger of blood,
And drives them bleating from their sports and food
Care loads his brow, and pity wrings his heart,
For lo, the murd'ring Butcher with his cart,

Demands the firstlings of his flock to die,
And makes a sport of life and liberty!
His gay companions Giles beholds no more;
Closed are their eyes, their fleeces drench'd in gore;
Nor can Compassion, with her softest notes,
Withhold the knife that plunges through their throats.

Down, Indignation! hence, ideas foul!
Away the shocking image from my soul!
Let kindlier visitants attend my way,
Beneath approaching Summer's fervid ray;
Nor thankless glooms obtrude, nor cares annoy,
Whilst the sweet theme is universal joy.

SUMMER.

ARGUMENT.

Turnip-sowing. — Wheat-ripening. — Sparrows. — Insects. — The Skylark. — Reaping, &c. — Harvest-field, Dairy-maid, &c. — Labours of the Barn. — The Gander. — Night: a Thunder-storm. — Harvest-home. — Reflections, &c.

THE Farmer's life displays in every part,
A moral lesson to the sensual heart.
Though in the lap of Plenty, thoughtful still,
He looks beyond the present good or ill;
Nor estimates alone one blessing's worth,
From changeful seasons, or capricious earth,
But views the future with the present hours,
And looks for failures as he looks for showers;
For casual as for certain want prepares,
And round his yard the reeking haystack rears;
Or clover, blossom'd lovely to the sight,
His team's rich store through many a wintry night.
What though abundance round his dwelling spreads,
Though ever moist his self-improving meads
Supply his dairy with a copious flood,
And seem to promise unexhausted food;
That promise fails, when buried deep in snow,
And vegetative juices cease to flow.
For this, his plough turns up the destined lands,
Whence stormy Winter draws its full demands;
For this the seed minutely small he sows,
Whence sound and sweet the hardy turnip grows.
But how unlike to April's closing[1] days!
High climbs the Sun, and darts his powerful rays;
Whitens the fresh-drawn mould, and pierces[2] through
The cumbrous clods that tumble round the plough.
O'er heaven's bright azure hence with joyful eyes
The farmer sees dark clouds assembling rise;

(1) MS. milder. (2) MS. parches.

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SUMMER.

Borne o'er his fields a heavy torrent falls,
And strikes the earth in hasty driving squalls.[1]
"Right welcome down, ye precious drops," he cries;
But soon, too soon, the partial blessing flies.
"Boy, bring the harrows, try how deep the rain
Has[2] forced its way."
He comes, but comes in vain;
Dry dust beneath the bubbling surface lurks,
And mocks the pains the more, the more he works:
Still, midst huge clods, he plunges on forlorn,
That laugh his harrows and the shower to scorn.
E'en thus the living clod, the stubborn fool,
Resists the stormy lectures of the school,
Till tried with gentler means, the dunce to please,
His head imbibes right reason by degrees;
As when from eve till morning's wakeful hour,
Light constant rain evinces[3] secret power,
And ere the day resumes its wonted smiles,
Presents a cheerful, easy task for Giles.
Down with a touch the mellow'd soil is laid,
And yon tall crop next claims his timely aid;
Thither well pleased he hies, assured to find
Wild trackless haunts and objects to his mind.

Shot up from broad rank blades that droop below,
The nodding wheat-ear forms a graceful bow,
With milky kernels starting full, weigh'd down,
Ere yet the sun hath tinged its head with brown;
There thousands in a flock, for ever gay,
Loud chirping sparrows welcome on the day,
And from the mazes of the leafy thorn
Drop one by one upon the bending corn.
Giles with a pole assails their close retreats,
And round the grass-grown dewy border beats,
On either side completely overspread,
Here branches bend, there corn o'ertops his head.
Green covert, hail! for through the varying year
No hours so sweet, no scene to him so dear.
Here Wisdom's placid eye delighted sees
His frequent intervals of lonely ease,
And with one ray his infant soul inspires,
Just kindling there her never-dying fires,

(1) Cf. Thomson's Seasons, "Spring," vv. 172 sqq.
(2) MS. Have. (3) MS. evince its.

Whence solitude derives peculiar charms,
And heaven-directed thought his bosom warms.
Just where the parting bough's light shadows play,
Scarce in the shade, nor in the scorching day,
Stretch'd on the turf he lies, a peopled bed,
Where swarming insects creep around his head.
The small dust-colour'd beetle climbs with pain,
O'er the smooth plantain-leaf, a spacious plain!
Thence higher still, by countless steps convey'd,
He gains the summit of a shiv'ring blade,
And flirts his filmy wings, and looks around,
Exulting in his distance from the ground.
The tender speckled moth here dancing seen,
The vaulting grasshopper of glossy green,
And all prolific Summer's sporting train,
Their little lives by various pow'rs sustain.
But what can unassisted vision do?
What, but recoil where most it would pursue;
His patient gaze but finish with a sigh,
When Music waking speaks the skylark nigh!
Just starting from the corn, he cheerly[1] sings,
And trusts with conscious pride his downy wings;
Still louder breathes, and in the face of day
Mounts up, and calls on Giles to mark his way.
Close to his eyes his hat he instant bends,
And forms a friendly telescope, that lends
Just aid enough to dull the glaring light,
And place the wand'ring bird before his sight,
That oft beneath a light cloud sweeps along,
Lost for a while, yet pours the varied song:
The eye still follows, and the cloud moves by,
Again he stretches up the clear blue sky;
His form, his motion undistinguish'd quite,
Save when he wheels direct from shade to light:
E'en then the songster a mere speck became,
Gliding like Fancy's bubbles in a dream,
The gazer sees; but yielding to repose,
Unwittingly his jaded eyelids close.
Delicious sleep! From sleep who could forbear,
With no more guilt than Giles, and no more care?
Peace o'er his slumbers waves her guardian wing,
Nor Conscience once disturbs him with a sting;

(1) *Cheerly*, cheerily.

He wakes refresh'd from every trivial pain,
And takes his pole, and brushes round again.

Its dark-green hue, its sicklier tints all fail,
And ripening harvest rustles in the gale.
A glorious sight, if glory dwells below,
Where Heaven's munificence makes all the show
O'er every field and golden prospect found,
That glads the ploughman's Sunday morning's round,
When on some eminence he takes his stand,
To judge the smiling produce of the land.
Here Vanity slinks back, her head to hide:
What is there here to flatter human pride?
The tow'ring fabric, or the dome's loud roar,
And steadfast columns, may astonish more,
Where the charm'd gazer long delighted stays,
Yet traced but to the architect the praise;
Whilst here, the veriest clown that treads the sod,
Without one scruple gives the praise to God;
And twofold joys possess his raptured mind,
From gratitude and admiration join'd.

Here, midst the boldest triumphs of her worth,
Nature herself invites the reapers forth;
Dares the keen sickle from its twelvemonth's rest,
And gives that ardour which in every breast
From Infancy to Age alike appears,
When the first sheaf its plumy top uprears.
No rake takes here what Heaven to all bestows—
Children of want, for you the bounty flows!
And every cottage from the plenteous store
Receives a burden nightly at its door.

Hark! where the sweeping scythe now rips along:
Each sturdy mower, emulous and strong,
Whose writhing form[1] meridian heat defies,
Bends o'er his work, and every sinew tries;
Prostrates the waving treasure at his feet,
But spares the rising clover, short and sweet.
Come, Health! come, Jollity! light-footed, come;
Here hold your revels, and make this your home.
Each heart awaits and hails you as its own;
Each moisten'd brow, that scorns to wear a frown:
The' unpeopled dwelling mourns its tenants stray'd;
E'en the domestic laughing dairy-maid

(1) MS. loins.

Hies to the field, the general toil to share.
Meanwhile the farmer quits his elbow-chair,
His cool brick floor, his pitcher, and his ease,
And braves the sultry beams, and gladly sees
His gates thrown open, and his teem abroad,
The ready group attendant on his word,
To turn the swarth, the quiv'ring load to rear,
Or ply the busy rake, the land to clear.
Summer's light garb itself now cumb'rous grown,
Each his thin doublet in the shade throws down;
Where oft the mastiff skulks with half-shut eye,
And rouses at the stranger passing by;
Whilst unrestrain'd the social converse flows,
And every breast Love's powerful impulse knows,
And rival wits with more than rustic grace
Confess the presence of a pretty face.

For, lo! encircled there, the lovely Maid,
In youth's own bloom and native smiles array'd;
Her hat awry, divested of her gown,
Her creaking stays of leather, stout and brown;—
Invidious barrier! Why art thou so high,
When the slight covering of her neck slips by,
There half revealing to the eager sight,
Her full, ripe bosom, exquisitely white?
In many a local tale of harmless mirth,
And many a jest of momentary birth,
She bears a part, and as she stops to speak,
Strokes back the ringlets from her glowing cheek.

Now noon gone by, and four declining hours,
The weary limbs relax their boasted powers;
Thirst rages strong, the fainting spirits fail,
And ask the sov'reign cordial, home-brew'd ale:
Beneath some shelt'ring heap of yellow corn
Rests the hoop'd keg, and friendly cooling horn,
That mocks alike the goblet's brittle frame,
Its costlier potions, and its nobler name.
To Mary first the brimming draught is given,
By toil made welcome as the dews of heaven,
And never lip that press'd its homely edge
Had kinder blessings, or a heartier pledge.

Of wholesome viands here a banquet smiles,
A common cheer for all;—e'en humble Giles,

Who joys his trivial services to yield
Amidst the fragrance of the open field;
Oft doom'd in suffocating heat to bear
The cobweb'd barn's impure and dusty air;
To ride in mirky state the panting steed,
Destined aloft the' unloaded grain to tread,
Where, in his path as heaps on heaps are thrown,
He rears, and plunges the loose mountain down:
Laborious task! with what delight, when done,
Both horse and rider greet the' unclouded sun!

Yet by the' unclouded sun are hourly bred
The bold assailants that surround thine head,
Poor, patient Ball! and with insulting wing
Roar in thine ears, and dart the piercing sting:
In thy behalf the crest-waved[1] boughs avail
More than thy short-clipt remnant of a tail,
A moving mockery, a useless name,
A living proof of cruelty and shame.
Shame to the man, whatever fame he bore,
Who took from thee what man can ne'er restore,
Thy weapon of defence, thy chiefest good,
When swarming flies contending suck thy blood.
Nor thine alone the suff'ring, thine the care,
The fretful ewe bemoans an equal share;
Tormented into sores, her head she hides,
Or angry sweeps them[2] from her new-shorn sides.
Penn'd in the yard, e'en now at closing day
Unruly cows with mark'd impatience stay,
And vainly striving to escape their foes,
The pail kick down; a piteous current flows.

Is 't not enough that plagues like these molest?
Must still another foe annoy their rest?
He comes, the pest and terror of the yard,
His full-fledged progeny's imperious guard;
The gander;—spiteful, insolent, and bold,
At the colt's footlock takes his daring hold:
There, serpent like, escapes a dreadful blow;
And straight attacks a poor defenceless cow:
Each booby goose the' unworthy strife enjoys,
And hails his prowess with redoubled noise.
Then back he stalks, of self-importance full,

(1) MS. crest of. (2) MS. brush them.

Seizes the shaggy foretop of the bull,
Till whirl'd aloft he falls: a timely check,
Enough to dislocate his worthless neck:
For lo! of old, he boasts an honour'd wound;
Behold that broken wing that trails the ground!
Thus fools and bravoes kindred pranks pursue;
As savage quite, and oft as fatal too.
Happy the man that foils an envious elf,
Using [1] the darts of spleen to serve himself.
As when by turns the strolling swine engage
The utmost efforts of the bully's rage,
Whose nibbling warfare on the grunter's side
Is welcome pleasure to his bristly hide:
Gently he stoops, or stretch'd at ease along,
Enjoys the insults of the gabbling throng,
That march exulting round his fallen head,
As human victors trample on their dead.

Still Twilight, welcome! Rest, how sweet art thou!
Now eve o'erhangs the western cloud's thick brow:
The far-stretch'd curtain of retiring light,
With fiery treasures fraught; that on the sight
Flash from its bulging sides, where darkness lours,
In Fancy's eye, a chain of mould'ring tow'rs;
Or craggy coasts just rising into view,
Midst jav'lins dire, and darts of streaming blue.

Anon tired labourers bless their shelt'ring home,
When midnight, and the frightful tempest come.
The farmer wakes, and sees, with silent dread,
The angry shafts of Heaven gleam round his bed;
The bursting cloud reiterated roars,
Shakes his straw roof, and jars his bolted doors:
The slow-wing'd storm along the troubled skies
Spreads its dark course; the wind begins to rise;
And full-leaf'd elms, his dwelling's shade by day,
With mimic thunder give its fury way:
Sounds in the chimney-top a doleful peal
Midst pouring rain, or gusts of rattling hail;
With tenfold danger low the tempest bends,
And quick and strong the sulph'rous flame descends:
The frighten'd mastiff from his kennel flies,
And cringes at the door with piteous cries....

(1) MS. And use.

Where now 's the trifler? where the child of pride?
These are the moments when the heart is tried!
Nor lives the man, with conscience e'er so clear,
But feels a solemn, reverential fear;
Feels too a joy relieve his aching breast,
When the spent storm hath howl'd itself to rest.
Still, welcome beats the long-continued show'r,
And sleep protracted, comes with double pow'r;
Calm dreams of bliss bring on the morning sun,
For every barn is fill'd, and Harvest done!

Now, ere sweet Summer bids its long adieu,
And winds blow keen where late the blossom grew,
The bustling day and jovial night must come,
The long-accustom'd feast of Harvest-home.
No blood-stain'd victory, in story bright,
Can give the philosophic mind delight;
No triumph please, while rage and death destroy:
Reflection sickens at the monstrous joy.
And where the joy, if rightly understood,
Like cheerful praise for universal good?
The soul nor check nor doubtful anguish knows,
But free and pure the grateful current flows.

Behold the sound oak table's massy frame
Bestride the kitchen floor! the careful dame
And gen'rous host invite their friends around,
For all that clear'd the crop, or till'd the ground,
Are guests by right of custom:—old and young;
And many a neighbouring yeoman join the throng,
With artisans that lent their dext'rous aid,
When o'er each field the flaming sunbeams play'd.

Yet plenty reigns, and from her boundless hoard,
Though not one jelly trembles on the board,
Supplies the feast with all that sense can crave;
With all that made our great forefathers brave,
Ere the cloy'd palate countless flavours tried,
And cooks had Nature's judgment set aside.
With thanks to Heaven, and tales of rustic lore,
The mansion echoes when the banquet 's o'er;
A wider circle spreads, and smiles abound,
As quick the frothing horn performs its round;
Care's mortal foe; that sprightly joys imparts
To cheer the[1] frame and elevate their hearts.

(1) MS. their.

Here, fresh and brown, the hazel's produce lies
In tempting heaps, and peals of laughter rise,
And crackling music, with the frequent song,
Unheeded bear the midnight hour along.

Here once a year Distinction low'rs its crest,
The master, servant, and the merry guest,
Are equal all; and round the happy ring
The reaper's eyes exulting glances fling,
And, warm'd with gratitude, he quits his place,
With sunburnt hands and ale-enliven'd face,
Refills the jug his honour'd host to tend,
To serve at once the master and the friend;
Proud thus to meet his smiles, to share his tale,
His nuts, his conversation, and his ale.

Such were the days,—of days long past I sing,
When Pride gave place to mirth without a sting;
Ere tyrant customs strength sufficient bore
To violate the feelings of the poor;
To leave them distanced in the maddening race,
Where'er refinement shows its hated face:
Nor causeless hated;—'tis the peasant's curse,
That hourly makes his wretched station worse;
Destroys life's intercourse; the social plan
That rank to rank cements, as man to man:
Wealth flows around him, Fashion lordly reigns;
Yet poverty is his, and mental pains.

Methinks I hear the mourner thus impart
The stifled murmurs of his wounded heart:
"Whence comes this change, ungracious, irksome, cold?
Whence the new grandeur that mine eyes behold?
The widening distance which I daily see,
Has Wealth done this?—then Wealth's a foe to me;
Foe to our rights; that leaves a powerful few
The paths of emulation to pursue:—
For emulation stoops to us no more:
The hope of humble industry is o'er;
The blameless hope, the cheering sweet presage
Of future comforts for declining age.
Can my sons share from this paternal hand
The profits with the labours of the land?
No; though indulgent Heaven its blessing deigns,
Where 's the small farm to suit my scanty means?

Content, the poet sings, with us resides ;
In lonely cots like mine, the damsel hides ;
And will he then in raptured visions tell
That sweet Content with Want can never dwell ?
A barley loaf, 'tis true, my table crowns,
That fast diminishing in lusty rounds,
Stops Nature's cravings; yet her sighs will flow
From knowing this,—that once it was not so.
Our annual feast, when earth her plenty yields,
When crown'd with boughs the last load quits the fields,
The aspect still of ancient joy puts on;
The aspect only, with the substance gone:
The self-same horn is still at our command,
But serves none now but [1] the plebeian hand:
For home-brew'd ale, neglected and debased,
Is quite discarded from the realms of taste.
Where unaffected freedom charm'd the soul,
The separate table and the costly bowl,
Cool as the blast that checks the budding Spring,
A mockery of gladness round them fling.
For oft the farmer, ere his heart approves,
Yields up the custom which he dearly loves:
Refinement forces on him like a tide,
Bold innovations down its current ride,
That bear no peace beneath their showy dress,
Nor add one tittle to his happiness.
His guests selected ; rank's punctilios known ;
What trouble waits upon a casual frown !
Restraint's foul manacles his pleasures maim ;
Selected guests selected phrases claim :
Nor reigns that joy, when hand in hand they join,
That good old master felt in shaking mine.
Heaven bless his memory ! bless his honour'd name !
(The poor will speak his lasting worthy fame :)
To souls fair-purposed strength and guidance give;
In pity to us still let goodness live:
Let labour have its due ! my cot shall be
From chilling want and guilty murmurs free :
Let labour have its due ; then peace is mine,
And never, never, shall my heart repine."

(1) MS. other than.

AUTUMN.

ARGUMENT.

Acorns.—Hogs in the Wood.—Wheat-sowing.—The Church.—Village Girls.—The Mad Girl.—The Bird Boy's Hut.—Disappointment; Reflections, &c.—Euston-hall.—Fox-hunting.—Old Trouncer.—Long Nights.—A Welcome to Winter.

AGAIN, the year's decline, midst storms and floods,
The thundering chase, the yellow fading woods,
Invite my song; that fain would boldly tell
Of upland coverts, and the echoing dell,
By turns resounding loud, at eve and morn
The swineherd's halloo, or the huntsman's horn.

No more the fields with scatter'd grain supply
The restless wandering tenants of the stye;
From oak to oak they run with eager haste,
And wrangling share the first delicious taste
Of fallen acorns; yet but thinly found
Till the strong gale has shook them to the ground.
It comes; and roaring woods obedient wave:
Their home well pleased the joint adventurers leave:
The trudging sow leads forth her numerous young,
Playful, and white, and clean, the briars among,
Till briars and thorns increasing, fence them round,
Where last year's mould'ring leaves bestrew the ground,
And o'er their heads, loud lash'd by furious squalls,
Bright from their cups the rattling treasure falls;
Hot, thirsty food; whence doubly sweet and cool
The welcome margin of some rush-grown pool,
The wild duck's lonely haunt, whose jealous eye
Guards every point; who sits, prepared to fly,
On the calm bosom of her little lake,
Too closely screen'd for ruffian winds to shake;
And as the bold intruders press around,
At once she starts, and rises with a bound:
With bristles raised the sudden noise they hear,
And ludicrously wild, and wing'd with fear,

The herd decamp with more than swinish speed,
And snorting dash through sedge, and rush, and reed:
Through tangling thickets headlong on they go,
Then stop and listen for their fancied foe;
The hindmost still the growing panic spreads,
Repeated fright the first alarm succeeds,
Till Folly's wages, wounds and thorns, they reap:
Yet glorying in their fortunate escape,
Their groundless terrors by degrees soon cease,
And Night's dark reign restores their wonted peace.
For now the gale subsides, and from each bough
The roosting pheasant's short but frequent crow
Invites to rest; and huddling side by side,
The herd in closest ambush seek to hide;
Seek some warm slope with shagged moss o'erspread,
Dried leaves their copious covering and their bed,
In vain may Giles, through gath'ring glooms that fall,
And solemn silence, urge his piercing call:
Whole days and nights they tarry midst their store,
Nor quit the woods till oaks can yield no more.

Beyond bleak Winter's rage, beyond the Spring
That rolling Earth's unvarying course will bring,
Who tills the ground looks on with mental eye,
And sees next Summer's sheaves and cloudless sky;
And even now, whilst Nature's beauty dies,
Deposits Seed, and bids new Harvests rise;
Seed well prepared, and warm'd with glowing lime,
'Gainst earth-bred grubs, and cold, and lapse of time:
For searching frosts and various ills invade,
Whilst wintry months depress the springing blade.
The plough moves heavily, and strong the soil,
And clogging harrows with augmented toil
Dive deep: and clinging, mixes with the mould
A fatt'ning treasure from the nightly fold,
And all the cow-yard's highly valued store,
That late bestrew'd the blacken'd surface o'er.
No idling hours are here, when Fancy trims
Her dancing taper over outstretch'd limbs,
And in her thousand thousand colours drest,
Plays round the grassy couch of noontide rest:
Here Giles for hours of indolence atones
With strong exertion, and with weary bones,
And knows no leisure; till the distant chime
Of Sabbath bells he hears at sermon time,

That down the brook sound sweetly in the gale,
Or strike the rising hill, or skim the dale.

Nor his [1] alone the sweets of ease [2] to taste:
Kind rest extends to all, save one poor beast,
That true to time and pace, is doom'd to plod,
To bring the Pastor to the House of God:
Mean structure; where no bones [3] of heroes lie!
The rude inelegance of Poverty
Reigns here alone: else why that roof of straw?
Those narrow windows with the frequent flaw?
O'er whose low cells the dock and mallow spread,
And rampant nettles lift the spiry head,
Whilst from the hollows of the tower on high
The gray-capp'd daws in saucy legions fly.

Round these lone walls assembling neighbours meet,
And tread departed friends beneath their feet;
And new-briar'd graves, that prompt the secret sigh,
Show each the spot where he himself must lie.

Midst timely greetings village news goes round,
Of crops late shorn, or crops that deck the ground;
Experienced ploughmen in the circle join;
While sturdy boys, in feats of strength to shine,
With pride elate, their young associates brave
To jump from hollow-sounding grave to grave;
Then close consulting, each his talent lends
To plan fresh sports when tedious service ends.

Hither at times, with cheerfulness of soul,
Sweet village Maids from neighbouring hamlets stroll,
That like the light-heel'd does o'er lawns that rove,
Look shyly curious; rip'ning into love;
For Love 's their errand: hence the tints that glow [4]
On either cheek, a [5] heighten'd lustre know: [6]
When, conscious of their charms, e'en Age looks sly,
And rapture beams from Youth's observant eye.

The Pride of such a party, Nature's pride,
Was lovely Poll; [7] who innocently tried,
With hat of airy shape and ribbons gay,
Love to inspire, and stand in Hymen's way:

(1) MS. Giles. (2) MS. leisure. (3) MS. dust.
(4) MS. and the rose that blow. (5) MS. with. (6) MS. glow.
(7) The author has since conversed with this unfortunate woman, and finds that her name is not *Mary*, but *Ann Rayner*, of Ixworth Thorpe: she is very much recovered, and appears to have a true sense of her past calamity.

But, ere her twentieth Summer could expand,
Or youth was render'd happy with her hand,
Her mind's serenity, her peace was gone,
Her eye grew languid, and she wept alone:
Yet causeless seem'd her Grief; for quick restrain'd,
Mirth followed loud; or Indignation reign'd:
Whims wild and simple led her from her home,
The heath, the common, or the fields to roam:
Terror and Joy alternate ruled her hours;
Now blithe she sung, and gather'd useless flowers;
Now pluck'd a tender twig from every bough,
To whip the hov'ring demons from her brow.
Ill-fated maid! thy guiding spark is fled,
And lasting wretchedness awaits thy bed—
Thy bed of straw! for mark, where even now
O'er their lost child afflicted parents bow;
Their woe she knows not, but perversely coy,
Inverted customs yield her [1] sullen joy;
Her midnight meals in secrecy she takes,
Low mutt'ring to the moon, that rising breaks
Through night's dark gloom—oh, how much more forlorn
Her night, that knows of no returning morn!—
Slow from the threshold, once her infant seat,
O'er the cold earth she crawls to her retreat;
Quitting the cot's warm walls, unhoused to lie,
Or share the swine's impure and narrow stye:
The damp night air her shiv'ring limbs assails:
In dreams she moans, and fancied wrongs bewails.
When morning wakes, none earlier roused than she,
When pendant drops fall glitt'ring from the tree;
But nought her rayless Melancholy cheers,
Or soothes her breast, or stops her streaming tears.
Her matted locks unornamented flow;
Clasping her knees, and waving to and fro;—
Her [2] head bow'd down, her faded cheek to hide;—
A piteous mourner by the pathway side.
Some tufted molehill through the livelong day
She calls her throne: there weeps her life away:
And oft the gaily-passing stranger stays
His well-timed step, and takes a silent gaze,
Till sympathetic drops unbidden start,
And pangs quick springing muster round his heart;

(1) MS. a. (2) MS. With.

And soft he treads with other gazers round,
And fain would catch her sorrow's plaintive sound:
One word alone is all that strikes the ear,
One short, pathetic, simple word,—"Oh dear!"
A thousand times repeated to the wind,
That wafts the sigh, but leaves the pang behind!
For ever of the proffer'd parley shy,
She hears the' unwelcome foot advancing nigh;
Nor quite unconscious of her wretched plight,
Gives one sad look, and hurries out of sight.

Fair promised sunbeams of terrestrial bliss,
Health's gallant hopes,—and are ye sunk to this?
For in life's road though thorns abundant grow,
There still are joys poor Poll can never know;
Joys which the gay companions of her prime
Sip, as they drift along the stream of time;
At eve to hear beside their tranquil home
The lifted latch, that speaks the lover come:
That love matured, next[1] playful on the knee
To press the velvet lip of Infancy;
To stay the tottering step, the features trace;—
Inestimable sweets of social peace!

O Thou, who bidst the vernal juices rise!
Thou, on whose blasts autumnal foliage flies!
Let Peace ne'er leave me, nor my heart grow cold,
Whilst Life and Sanity are mine to hold.

Shorn of their flowers that shed the' untreasured seed,
The withering pasture, and the fading mead,
Less tempting grown, diminish more and more,
The dairy's pride; sweet Summer's flowing store.
New cares succeed, and gentle duties press,
Where the fire-side, a school of tenderness,
Revives the languid chirp, and warms the blood
Of cold-nipt weaklings of the latter brood,
That from the shell just bursting into day,
Through yard or pond pursue their vent'rous way.

Far weightier cares and wider scenes expand;
What devastation marks the new-sown land!
"From hungry woodland foes go, Giles, and guard
The rising wheat; ensure its great reward:

(1) MS. and.

A future sustenance, a Summer's pride,
Demand thy vigilance: then be it tried:
Exert thy voice, and wield thy shotless gun:
Go, tarry there from morn till setting sun."

Keen blows the blast, or ceaseless rain descends;
The half-stript hedge a sorry shelter lends.
O for a Hovel, e'er so small or low,
Whose roof, repelling winds and early snow,
Might bring home's comforts fresh before his eyes!
No sooner thought, than see the structure rise,
In some sequester'd nook, embank'd around,
Sods for its walls, and straw in burdens bound.
Dried fuel hoarded is his richest store,
And circling smoke obscures his little door:
Whence creeping forth, to duty's call he yields,
And strolls the Crusoe of the lonely fields.
On whitethorns tow'ring, and the leafless rose,
A frost-nipt feast in bright vermilion glows;
Where clust'ring sloes in glossy order rise,
He crops the loaded branch; a cumbrous prize:
And o'er the flame the sputt'ring fruit he rests,
Placing [1] green sods to seat the coming guests;
His guests by promise; playmates young and gay:—
But ah! fresh pastimes lure their steps away!
He sweeps his hearth, and homeward looks in vain,
Till feeling Disappointment's cruel pain,
His fairy revels are exchanged for rage,
His banquet marr'd, grown dull his hermitage.
The field becomes his prison, till on high
Benighted birds to shades and coverts fly.
'Midst Air, Health, Daylight, can he prisoner be?
If fields are prisons, where is Liberty?
Here still she dwells, and here her votaries stroll;
But disappointed Hope untunes the soul:
Restraints unfelt whilst hours of rapture flow,
When troubles press, to chains and barriers grow.
Look then from trivial up to greater woes;
From the poor bird-boy with his roasted sloes,
To where the dungeon'd mourner heaves the sigh;
Where not one cheering sunbeam meets his eye.
Though ineffectual pity thine may be,
No wealth, no pow'r, to set the captive free;

(1) MS. And place.

Though only to thy ravish'd sight is given
The radiant path that Howard trod to heaven;
Thy slights can make the wretched more forlorn,
And deeper drive affliction's barbèd thorn.
Say not, "I'll come and cheer thy gloomy cell
With news of dearest friends; how good, how well:
I'll be a joyful herald to thine heart:"
Then fail, and play the worthless trifler's part,
To sip flat pleasures from thy glass's brim,
And waste the precious hour that 's due to him.
In mercy spare the base, unmanly blow:
Where can he turn, to whom complain of you?
Back to past joys in vain his thoughts may stray,
Trace and retrace the beaten, worn-out way,
The rankling injury will pierce his breast,
And curses on thee break his midnight rest.

Bereft of song, and ever-cheering green,
The soft endearments of the Summer scene,
New harmony pervades the solemn wood,
Dear to the soul, and healthful to the blood:
For bold exertion follows on the sound
Of distant sportsmen, and the chiding hound;
First heard from kennel bursting, mad with joy,
Where smiling Euston boasts her good Fitzroy,
Lord of pure alms, and gifts that wide extend;
The farmer's patron, and the poor man's friend:
Whose mansion glitters with the eastern ray,
Whose elevated temple points the way,
O'er slopes and lawns, the park's extensive pride,
To where the victims of the chase reside,
Ingulf'd in earth, in conscious safety warm,
Till lo! a plot portends their coming harm.

In earliest hours of dark and hooded morn,
Ere yet one rosy cloud bespeaks the dawn,
Whilst far abroad the fox pursues his prey,
He 's doomed to risk the perils of the day,
From his strong-hold block'd out; perhaps to bleed,
Or owe his life to fortune or to speed.
For now the pack, impatient rushing on,
Range through the darkest coverts one by one;
Trace every spot; whilst down each noble glade
That guides the eye beneath a changeful shade,

The loit'ring sportsman feels the' instinctive flame,
And checks his steed to mark the springing game.
Midst intersecting cuts and winding ways
The huntsman cheers his dogs, and anxious strays
Where every narrow riding, even shorn,
Gives back the echo of his mellow horn:
Till fresh and lightsome, every power untried,
The starting fugitive leaps by his side,
His lifted finger to his ear he plies,
And the view-halloo bids a chorus rise
Of dogs quick-mouth'd, and shouts that mingle loud
As bursting thunder rolls from cloud to cloud.
With ears erect, and chest of vig'rous mould,
O'er ditch, o'er fence, unconquerably bold,
The shining courser lengthens every bound,
And his strong foot-locks suck the moisten'd ground,
As from the confines of the wood they pour,
And joyous villages partake the roar.
O'er heath far stretch'd, or down, or valley low,
The stiff-limb'd peasant, glorying in the show,
Pursues in vain; where Youth itself soon tires,
Spite of the transports that the chase inspires;
For who unmounted long can charm the eye,
Or hear the music of the leading cry?

Poor faithful Trouncer! thou canst lead no more;
All thy fatigues and all thy triumphs o'er!
Triumphs of worth, whose long-excelling fame
Was still to follow true the hunted game!
Beneath enormous oaks, Britannia's boast,
In thick, impenetrable coverts lost,
When the warm pack in falt'ring silence stood,
Thine was the note that roused the list'ning wood,
Rekindling every joy with tenfold force,
Through all the mazes of the tainted course.
Still foremost thou the dashing stream to cross,
And tempt along the animated horse;
Foremost o er fen or level mead to pass,
And sweep the show'ring dew-drops from the grass;
Then bright emerging from the mist below
To climb the woodland hill's exulting brow.

Pride of thy race! with worth far less than thine,
Full many human leaders daily shine!

Less Faith, less Constancy, less gen'rous Zeal!—
Then no disgrace my humble verse shall feel,
Where not one lying line to Riches bows,
Or poison'd sentiments from Rancour flows;
Nor flowers are strewn around [1] Ambition's car:
An honest dog's a nobler theme by far.
Each sportsman heard the tidings with a sigh,
When Death's cold touch had stopt his tuneful cry;
And though high deeds, and fair exalted praise,
In memory lived, and flow'd in rustic lays,
Short was the strain of monumental woe:
"Foxes, rejoice! here buried lies your foe."[2]

In safety housed, throughout Night's length'ning reign,
The cock sends forth a loud and piercing strain;
More frequent, as the glooms of midnight flee,
And hours roll round, that brought him liberty,
When Summer's early dawn, mild, clear, and bright,
Chased quick away the transitory night:—
Hours now in darkness veil'd; yet loud the scream
Of geese impatient for the playful stream;
And all the feather'd tribe imprison'd raise
Their morning notes of inharmonious praise;
And many a clamorous hen and cockrel [3] gay,
When daylight slowly through the fog breaks way,
Fly wantonly abroad: but, ah, how soon
The shades of twilight follow hazy noon,
Short'ning the busy day!—day that slides by
Amidst the' unfinish'd toils of Husbandry;
Toils still each morn resumed with double care
To meet the icy terrors of the year;
To meet the threats of Boreas undismay'd,
And Winter's gathering frowns and hoary head.

Then welcome, cold; welcome, ye snowy nights!
Heaven midst your rage shall mingle pure delights,
And confidence of hope the soul sustain,
While devastation sweeps along the plain;
Nor shall the child of poverty despair,
But bless the Power that rules the changing year;
Assured,—though horrors round his cottage reign,—
That Spring will come, and Nature smile again.

(1) MS. bestrewing round.
(2) Inscribed on a stone in Euston park-wall.
(3) MS. capon.

CANCELLED

WINTER.

WINTER.

ARGUMENT.

Tenderness to Cattle.—Frozen Turnips.—The Cow-yard.—Night.—The Farm-house.—Fireside.—Farmer's Advice and Instruction.—Nightly Cares of the Stable.—Dobbin.—The Post-Horse.—Sheep-stealing Dogs.—Walks occasioned thereby.—The Ghost.—Lamb-time.—Returning Spring.—Conclusion.

WITH kindred pleasures moved, and cares opprest,
Sharing alike our weariness and rest;
Who lives the daily partner of our hours
Through every change of heat, and frost, and show'rs,
Partakes our cheerful meals, partaking first[1]
In mutual labour and fatigue and thirst;[2]
The kindly intercourse will ever prove
A bond of amity and social love.
To more than man this generous warmth extends,
And oft the team and shiv'ring herd befriends;
Tender Solicitude the bosom fills,
And Pity executes what Reason wills:
Youth learns Compassion's tale from ev'ry tongue,
And flies to aid the helpless and the young.

When now, unsparing as the scourge of war,
Blasts follow blasts, and groves dismantled roar,
Around their home the storm-pinch'd[3] cattle lows,[4]
No nourishment in frozen pastures grows;[5]
Yet frozen pastures every morn resound
With fair abundance thund'ring to the ground.
For though on hoary twigs no buds peep out,
And e'en the hardy brambles cease to sprout,
Beneath dread Winter's level sheets of snow
The sweet nutritious turnip deigns to grow.
Till now imperious Want and wide-spread Dearth
Bid Labour claim her treasures from the earth.

(1) MS. or burns with thirst. (2) MS. trust. (3) MS. dependent.
(4) MS. low. (5) MS. grow.

On Giles, and such as Giles, the labour falls,
To strew the frequent load where hunger calls.
On driving gales sharp hail indignant flies,
And sleet, more irksome still, assails his eyes;
Snow clogs his feet; or if no snow is seen,
The field with all its juicy store to screen,
Deep goes the frost, till every root is found
A rolling mass of ice upon the ground.
No tender ewe can break her nightly fast,
Nor heifer strong begin the cold repast,
Till Giles with pond'rous beetle foremost go,
And scatt'ring splinters fly at every blow;
When pressing round him, eager for the prize,
From their mixt breath warm exhalations rise.

In beaded rows if drops now deck the spray,
While the sun grants a momentary ray,
Let but a cloud's broad shadow intervene,
And stiffen'd into gems the drops are seen;
And down the furrow'd oak's broad southern side
Streams of dissolving rime no longer glide.

Though night approaching bids for rest[1] prepare,
Still the flail echoes through the frosty air,
Nor stops till deepest shades of darkness come,
Sending at length the weary labourer home.
From him, with bed and nightly food supplied,
Throughout the yard, housed round on every side,
Deep-plunging cows their rustling feast enjoy,
And snatch sweet mouthfuls from the passing boy,
Who moves unseen beneath his trailing load,
Fills the tall racks, and leaves a scatter'd road;
Where oft the swine from ambush warm and dry
Bolt out, and scamper headlong to their stye,
When Giles with well-known voice, already there,
Deigns them a portion of his evening care.

Him, though the cold may pierce, and storms molest,
Succeeding hours shall cheer with warmth and rest;
Gladness to spread, and raise the grateful smile,
He hurls the faggot bursting from the pile,
And many a log and rifted trunk conveys,
To heap the fire, and wide extend the blaze,

(1) MS. the world.

That quivering strong through every opening flies,
Whilst smoky columns unobstructed rise.
For the rude architect, unknown to fame
(Nor symmetry nor elegance his aim),
Who spread his floors of solid oak on high,
On beams rough-hewn, from age to age that lie,
Bade his wide fabric unimpair'd sustain
The orchard's store, and cheese, and golden grain;
Bade, from its central base, capacious laid,
The well-wrought chimney rear its lofty head;
Where since hath many a savoury ham been stored,
And tempests howl'd, and Christmas gambols roar'd.

Flat on the hearth the glowing embers lie,
And flames reflected dance in every eye:
There the long billet, forced at last to bend,
While gushing sap froths out at either end,
Throws round its welcome heat:—the ploughman smiles,
And oft the joke runs hard on sheepish Giles,
Who sits joint tenant of the corner-stool,
The converse sharing, though in duty's school;
For now attentively 'tis his to hear
Interrogations from the master's chair.

"Left ye your bleating charge, when daylight fled,
Near where the hay-stack lifts its snowy head?
Whose fence of bushy furze, so close and warm,
May stop the slanting bullets of the storm.
For, hark! it blows; a dark and dismal night:
Heaven guide the trav'ller's fearful steps aright!
Now from the woods, mistrustful and sharp-eyed,
The fox in silent darkness seems to glide,
Stealing around us, list'ning as he goes,
If chance the cock or stamm'ring capon crows,
Or goose, or nodding duck, should darkling cry
As if apprized of lurking danger nigh:
Destruction waits them, Giles, if e'er you fail
To bolt their doors against the driving gale.
Strew'd you[1] (still mindful of the' unshelter'd head)
Burdens of straw, the cattle's welcome bed?
Thine heart should feel, what thou may'st hourly see,
That duty's basis is humanity.
Of pain's unsavory cup though thou may'st taste
(The wrath of Winter from the bleak North-east)

(1) MS. ye.

Thine utmost suff'rings in the coldest day,
A period terminates, and joys repay.
Perhaps e'en now, while here those joys we boast,
Full many a bark rides down the neighb'ring coast,
Where the high northern waves tremendous roar,
Drove down by blasts from Norway's icy shore.
The Sea-boy there, less fortunate than thou,
Feels all thy pains in all the [1] gusts that blow;
His freezing hands now drench'd, now dry, by turns·
Now lost, now seen, the distant light that burns,
On some tall cliff upraised, a flaming guide,
That throws its friendly radiance o'er the tide.
His labours cease not with declining day,
But toils and perils mark his wat'ry way;
And whilst in peaceful dreams secure we lie,
The ruthless whirlwinds rage along the sky,
Round his head whistling: and shalt thou repine,
While this protecting roof still shelters thine!"

Mild, as the vernal shower, his words prevail,
And aid the moral precept of his tale:
His wond'ring hearers learn, and ever keep
These first ideas of the restless deep;
And, as the opening mind a circuit tries,
Present felicities in value rise.
Increasing pleasures every hour they find,
The warmth more precious, and the shelter kind;
Warmth that long reigning bids the eyelids close,
As through the blood its balmy influence goes,
When the cheer'd heart forgets fatigues and cares,
And drowsiness alone dominion bears.

Sweet then the ploughman's slumbers, hale and young,
When the last topic dies upon his tongue;
Sweet then the bliss his transient dreams inspire,
Till chilblains wake him, or the snapping fire:

He starts, and ever thoughtful of his team,
Along the glitt'ring snow a feeble gleam
Shoots from his lantern, as he yawning goes
To add fresh comforts to their night's repose
Diffusing fragrance as their food he moves,
And pats the jolly sides of those he loves.
Thus full replenish'd, perfect ease possess'd,
From night till morn alternate food and rest,

(1) MS. every.

No rightful cheer withheld, no sleep debarr'd,
Their [1] each day's labour brings its sure reward.[2]
Yet when from plough or lumb'ring cart set free,
They taste awhile the sweets of Liberty:
E'en sober Dobbin lifts his clumsy heel
And kicks, disdainful of the dirty wheel;
But soon, his frolic ended, yields again
To trudge the road, and wear the clinking chain.

Short-sighted Dobbin!—thou canst only see
The trivial hardships that encompass thee:
Thy chains were freedom, and thy toils repose,
Could the poor post-horse tell thee all his woes:
Show thee his bleeding shoulders, and unfold
The dreadful anguish he endures for gold:
Hired at each call of business, lust, or rage,
That prompts the traveller on from stage to stage.
Still on his strength depends their boasted speed;
For them his limbs grow weak, his bare ribs bleed;
And though he groaning quickens at command,
Their extra shilling in the rider's hand
Becomes his bitter scourge;—'tis he must feel
The double efforts of the lash and steel;
Till when, up hill, the destined hill he gains,
And trembling under complicated pains,
Prone from his nostrils, darting on the ground,
His breath emitted floats in clouds around:
Drops chase each other down his chest and sides,
And spatter'd mud his native colour hides;
Through his swoll'n veins the boiling torrent flows,
And every nerve a separate torture knows.
His harness loosed, he welcomes, eager-eyed,
The pail's full draught that quivers by his side;
And joys to see the well-known stable door,
As the starved mariner the friendly shore.

Ah, well for him if here his sufferings ceased,
And ample hours of rest his pains appeased!
But roused again, and sternly bade to rise,
And shake refreshing slumber from his eyes,
Ere his exhausted spirits can return,
Or through his frame reviving ardour burn,
Come forth he must, though limping, maim'd, and sore;
He hears the whip; the chaise is at the door:—

(1) MS. But. (2) Cf. Castle of Indolence, Canto II. Stanzas 50, 51.

The collar tightens, and again he feels
His half-heal'd wounds inflamed; again the wheels
With tiresome sameness in his ears resound,
O'er blinding dust, or miles of flinty ground.
Thus nightly robb'd, and injured day by day,
His piecemeal murderers wear his life away.
What say'st thou, Dobbin? what though hounds await
With open jaws the moment of thy fate,
No better fate attends his public race;
His life is misery, and his end disgrace.
Then freely bear thy burden to the mill;
Obey but one short law,—thy driver's will.
Affection to thy memory ever true,
Shall boast of mighty loads that Dobbin drew;
And back to childhood shall the mind with pride
Recount thy gentleness in many a ride
To pond, or field, or Village-fair, when thou
Held'st high thy braided mane and comely brow:
And oft the tale shall rise to homely fame
Upon thy generous spirit and thy name.

Though faithful to a proverb we regard
The midnight chieftain of the farmer's yard,
Beneath whose guardianship all hearts rejoice,
Woke by the echo of his hollow voice;
Yet as the hound may falt'ring quit the pack,
Snuff the foul scent, and hasten yelping back;
And e'en the docile pointer know disgrace,
Thwarting the general instinct of his race:
E'en so the mastiff, or the meaner cur,
At times will from the path of duty err,
(A pattern of fidelity by day,
By night a murderer, lurking for his prey,)
And round the pastures or the fold will creep,
And, coward-like, attack the peaceful sheep.
Alone the wanton mischief he pursues,
Alone in reeking blood his jaws imbrues:
Chasing amain his frighten'd victims round,
Till Death in wild confusion strews the ground;
Then wearied out, to kennel sneaks away,
And licks his guilty paws till break of day.

The deed discover'd, and the news once spread,
Vengeance hangs o'er the unknown culprit's head:

And careful Shepherds extra hours bestow
In patient watchings for the common foe;
A foe most dreaded now, when rest and peace
Should wait the season of the flock's increase.

In part these nightly terrors to dispel,
Giles, ere he sleeps, his little flock must tell.
From the fireside with many a shrug he hies,
Glad if the full-orb'd moon salute his eyes,
And through the' unbroken stillness of the night
Shed on his path her beams of cheering light.
With sauntering step he climbs the distant stile,
Whilst all around him wears a placid smile;
There views the white-robed clouds in clusters driven,
And all the glorious pageantry of Heaven.
Low, on the utmost boundary of the sight,
The rising vapours catch the silver light;
Thence Fancy measures, as they parting fly,
Which first will throw its shadow on the eye,
Passing the source of light; and thence away,
Succeeded quick by brighter still than they.
Far yet above these wafted clouds are seen
(In a remoter sky, still more serene)
Others, detach'd in ranges through the air,
Spotless as snow, and countless as they're fair;
Scatter'd immensely wide from east to west,
The beauteous 'semblance of a Flock at rest.
These, to the raptured mind, aloud proclaim
Their mighty Shepherd's everlasting Name.

Whilst thus the loiterer's utmost stretch of soul
Climbs the still clouds, or passes[1] those that roll,
And loosed Imagination soaring goes
High o'er his home, and all his little woes,
Time glides away; neglected Duty calls;
At once from plains of light to earth he falls,
And down a narrow lane, well known by day,
With all his speed pursues his sounding way,
In thought still half-absorb'd and chill'd with cold;
When lo! an object frightful to behold;
A grisly Spectre, clothed in silver-grey,
Around whose feet the waving shadows play,
Stands in his path!—He stops, and not a breath
Heaves from his heart, that sinks almost to death.

(1) MS. traverse.

Loud the Owl halloos o'er his head unseen;
All else is silent, dismally serene;
Some prompt ejaculation, whisper'd low,
Yet bears him up against the threat'ning foe;
And thus poor Giles, though half inclined to fly,
Mutters his doubts, and strains his stedfast eye.
"'Tis not my crimes thou com'st here to reprove;
No murders stain my soul, no perjured love:
If thou'rt indeed what here thou seem'st to be,
Thy dreadful mission cannot reach to me.
By parents taught still to mistrust mine eyes,
Still to approach each object of surprise,
Lest Fancy's formful visions should deceive
In moonlight paths, or glooms of falling eve,
This then 's the moment when my mind should try
To scan thy motionless deformity;
But oh, the fearful task! yet well I know
An aged Ash, with many a spreading bough,
(Beneath whose leaves I've found a Summer's bow'r,
Beneath whose trunk I've weather'd many a show'r,)
Stands singly down this solitary way,
But far beyond where now my footsteps stay.
'Tis true, thus far I've come with heedless haste;
No reck'ning kept, no passing objects traced:—
And can I then have reach'd that very tree?
Or is its reverend form assumed by thee?"

The happy thought alleviates his pain:
He creeps another step; then stops again:
Till slowly, as his noiseless feet draw near,
Its perfect lineaments at once appear;
Its crown of shiv'ring ivy whispering peace,
And its white bark that fronts the moon's pale face.
Now, whilst his blood mounts upward, now he knows
The solid gain that from Conviction flows;
And strengthen'd Confidence shall hence fulfil
(With conscious Innocence more valued still)
The dreariest task that winter nights can bring,
By churchyard dark, or grove, or fairy ring;
Still buoying up the timid mind of youth,
Till loit'ring Reason hoists the scale of Truth.
With these blest guardians Giles his course pursues,
Till numbering his heavy-sided ewes,
Surrounding stillness tranquillize his breast,
And shape the dreams that wait his hours of rest.

As when retreating tempests we behold,
Whose skirts at length the azure sky unfold,
And full of murmurings and mingled wrath,
Slowly unshroud the smiling face of earth,
Bringing the bosom joy: so Winter flies!—
And see the source of Life and Light uprise!
A height'ning arch o'er southern hills he bends;
Warm on the cheek the slanting beam descends,
And gives the reeking mead a brighter hue,
And draws the modest primrose bud to view.
Yet frosts succeed, and winds impetuous rush,
And hail-storms rattle through the budding bush;
And night-fall'n lambs require the shepherd's care,
And teeming ewes, that still their burdens bear;
Beneath whose sides to-morrow's dawn may see
The milk-white strangers bow the trembling knee;
At whose first birth[1] the powerful instinct 's seen
That fills with champions the daisied green:
For ewes that stood aloof with fearful eye,
With stamping foot now men and dogs defy,
And obstinately faithful to their young,
Guard their first steps to join the bleating throng.

But casualties and death from damps and cold
Will still attend the well-conducted fold:
Her tender offspring dead, the dam aloud
Calls, and runs wild amidst the' unconscious crowd:
And orphan'd sucklings raise the piteous cry;
No wool to warm them, no defenders nigh.
And must her streaming milk then flow in vain?
Must unregarded Innocence complain?
No;—ere this strong solicitude subside,
Maternal[2] fondness may be fresh applied,
And the adopted stripling still may find
A parent most assiduously kind.
For this he 's doom'd awhile disguised to range
(For fraud or force must work the wish'd-for change);
For this his predecessor's skin he wears,
Till, cheated into tenderness and cares,
The unsuspecting dam, contented grown,
Cherish and guard the fondlings as her own.

Thus all by turns to fair perfection rise;
Thus twins are parted to increase their size:

(1) MS. First at whose birth. (2) MS. Paternal.

Thus instinct yields as interest points the way,
Till the bright flock, augmenting every day,
On sunny hills and vales of springing flow'rs
With ceaseless clamour greet the vernal hours.

The humbler shepherd here with joy beholds
The' approved economy of crowded folds,
And, in his small contracted round of cares,
Adjusts the practice of each hint he hears;
For boys with emulation learn to glow,
And boast their pastures, and their healthful show
Of well-grown lambs, the glory of the spring;
And field to field in competition bring.

E'en Giles, for all his cares and watchings past,
And all his contests with the wintry blast,
Claims a full share of that sweet praise bestow'd
By gazing neighbours, when along the road,
Or village green, his curly-coated throng
Suspends the chorus of the spinner's song;
When Admiration's unaffected grace
Lisps from the tongue, and beams in ev'ry face:
Delightful moments!—Sunshine, Health, and Joy,
Play round, and cheer the elevated boy!
"Another Spring!" his heart exulting cries;
"Another Year! with promised blessings rise!—
Eternal Power! from whom those blessings flow,
Teach me still more to wonder, more to know:
Seed-time and Harvest let me see again;
Wander the leaf-strewn wood, the frozen plain:
Let the first flower, corn-waving field, plain, tree,[1]
Here round my home, still lift my soul to thee;
And let me ever, midst thy bounties, raise
An humble note of thankfulness and praise!"

(1) These two lines ran in the MS.:—

"Pierce the dark wood and brave the sultry plain,
Let field and dimpled brook, and flower and tree."

APRIL 22, 1798.

THE BANKS OF WYE.

TO

THOMAS LLOYD BAKER, ESQ.

OF STOUT'S HILL, ULEY,

AND HIS EXCELLENT LADY;

AND

ROBERT BRANSBY COOPER, ESQ.

OF FERNEY HILL, DURSLEY,

IN THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER,

AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY,

This Journal is Dedicated,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF HIGH ESTEEM,

AND A LIVELY RECOLLECTION OF PAST PLEASURES,

BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

In the summer of 1807, a party of my good friends in Gloucestershire proposed to themselves a short excursion down the Wye, and through part of South Wales.

While this plan was in agitation, the lines which I had composed on "Shooter's Hill," during ill health, and inserted in my last volume, obtained their particular attention. A spirit of prediction, as well as sorrow, is there indulged; and it was now in the power of this happy party to falsify such predictions, and to render a pleasure to the writer of no common kind. An invitation to accompany them was the consequence; and the following journal is the result of that invitation.

Should the reader, from being a resident, or frequent visitor, be well acquainted with the route, and able to discover inaccuracies in distances, succession of objects, or local particulars, he is requested to recollect, that the party was out but ten days,—a period much too short for correct and laborious description, but quite sufficient for all the powers of poetry which I feel capable of exerting. The whole exhibits the language and feelings of a man who had never before seen a mountainous country; and of this it is highly necessary that the reader should be apprised.

A Swiss, or perhaps a Scottish Highlander, may smile at supposed or real exaggerations; but they will be excellent critics, when they call to mind that they themselves judge, in these cases, as I do, by comparison.

Perhaps it may be said, that because much of public approbation has fallen to my lot, it was unwise to venture again. I confess that the journey left such powerful, such unconquerable impressions on my mind, that embodying my thoughts in rhyme, became a matter almost of necessity. To the parties concerned I know it will be an acceptable little volume: to whom, and to the public, it is submitted with due respect.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

City Road, London,
June 30, 1811.

THE BANKS OF WYE.

BOOK I.

The Vale of Uley.—Forest of Dean.—Ross.—Wilton Castle.—Goodrich Castle.—Courtfield, Welch Bicknor, Coldwell.—Gleaner's Song.—Coldwell Rocks.—Symmon's Yat.—Great Doward.—New Wier.—Arthur's Hall.—Martin's Well.—The Coricle.—Arrival at Monmouth.

"ROUSE from thy slumber, pleasure calls, arise,
Quit thy half-rural bower, awhile despise
The thraldom that consumes thee. We who dwell
Far from thy land of smoke, advise thee well.
Here Nature's bounteous hand around shall fling,
Scenes that thy Muse hath never dared to sing.
When sickness weigh'd thee down, and strength declined;
When dread eternity absorb'd thy mind,
Flow'd the predicting verse, by gloom o'erspread,
That 'Cambrian mountains' thou shouldst never tread,
That 'time-worn cliff, and classic stream to see,'
Was wealth's prerogative, despair for thee.
Come to the proof; with us the breeze inhale,
Renounce despair, and come to Severn's vale;
And where the Cotswold Hills are stretch'd along,
Seek our green dell, as yet unknown to song:
Start hence with us, and trace, with raptured eye,
The wild meanderings of the beauteous Wye;
Thy ten days' leisure ten days' joy shall prove,
And rock and stream breathe amity and love."

Such was the call; with instant ardour hail'd,
The Syren Pleasure caroll'd and prevail'd;
Soon the deep dell appear'd, and the clear brow
Of Uley Bury[1] smiled o'er all below,
Mansion, and flock, and circling woods that hung
Round the sweet pastures where the skylark sung.
O for the fancy, vigorous and sublime,
Chaste as the theme, to triumph over Time!

(1) Bury, or Burg, the Saxon name for a hill, particularly for one wholly or partially formed by art.

Bright as the rising Day, and firm as Truth,
To speak new transports to the Lowland youth,
That bosoms still might throb, and still adore,
When his who strives to charm them beats no more!

One August morn, with spirits high,
Sound health, bright hopes, and cloudless sky,
A cheerful group their farewell bade
To Dursley tower, to Uley's shade;
And where bold Stinchcomb's greenwood side,
Heaves in the van of highland pride,
Scour'd the broad vale of Severn; there
The foes of verse shall never dare
Genius to scorn, or bound its power,
There blood-stain'd Berkley's turrets low'r,
A name that cannot pass away,
Till time forgets "the Bard" of Gray.

Quitting fair Glo'ster's northern road,
To gain the pass of Framelode,
Before us Dean's black forest spread,
And May Hill, with his tufted head,
Beyond the ebbing tide appear'd;
And Cambria's distant mountains rear'd
Their dark blue summits far away;
And Severn, 'midst the burning day,
Curved his bright line, and bore along
The mingled Avon, pride of song.

The trembling steeds soon ferried o'er,
Neigh'd loud upon the forest shore;
Domains that once, at early morn,
Rang to the hunter's bugle horn,
When barons proud would bound away;
When even kings would hail the day,
And swell with pomp more glorious shows,
Than ant-hill population knows.
Here crested chiefs their bright-arm'd train
Of javelin'd horsemen roused amain,
And chasing wide the wolf or boar,
Bade the deep woodland valleys roar.

Harmless we past, and unassail'd,
Nor once at roads or turnpikes rail'd:
Through depths of shade oft sunbeams broke,
Midst noble Flaxley's bowers of oak;

And many a cottage trim and gay,
Whisper'd delight through all the way;
On hills exposed, in dells unseen,
To patriarchal Mitchel Dean.
Rose-cheek'd Pomona there was seen,
And Ceres edged her fields between,
And on each hill-top mounted high,
Her sickle waved in ecstasy;
Till, Ross, thy charms all hearts confess'd,
Thy peaceful walks, thy hours of rest
And contemplation. Here the mind,
With all its luggage left behind,
Dame Affectation's leaden wares,
Spleen, envy, pride, life's thousand cares,
Feels all its dormant fires revive,
And sees "the Man of Ross" alive;
And hears the Twick'nham Bard again,
To Kyrl's high virtues lift his strain;
Whose own hand clothed this far-famed hill
With rev'rend elms, that shade us still;
Whose mem'ry shall survive the day,
When elms and empires feel decay.
Kyrl die, by bard ennobled? Never;
"The Man of Ross" shall live for ever;
Ross, that exalts its spire on high,
Above the flow'ry-margin'd Wye,
Scene of the morrow's joy, that prest
Its unseen beauties on our rest
In dreams; but who of dreams would tell,
Where truth sustains the song so well?

The morrow came, and Beauty's eye
Ne'er beam'd upon a lovelier sky;
Imagination instant brought,
And dash'd amidst the train of thought,
Tints of the bow. The boatman stript;
Glee at the helm exulting tript,
And waved her flower-encircled wand,
"Away, away, to Fairy Land."
Light dipt the oars; but who can name
The various objects dear to fame,
That changing, doubting, wild, and strong,
Demand the noblest powers of song?
Then, O forgive the vagrant Muse,
Ye who the sweets of Nature choose ·

And thou whom Destiny has tied
To this romantic river's side,
Down gazing from each close retreat,
On boats that glide beneath thy feet,
Forgive the stranger's meagre line,
That seems to slight that spot of thine;
For he, alas! could only glean
The changeful outlines of the scene;
A momentary bliss; and here
Links memory's power with rapture's tear.

Who curb'd the barons' kingly power?[1]
Let Hist'ry tell that fateful hour
At home, when surly winds shall roar,
And prudence shut the study door.
De Wiltons here of mighty name,
The whelming flood, the summer stream,
Mark'd from their towers.—The fabric falls,
The rubbish of their splendid halls,
Time in his march hath scatter'd wide,
And blank Oblivion strives to hide.

Awhile the grazing herd was seen,
And trembling willow's silver green,
Till the fantastic current stood,
In line direct for Pencraig Wood;
Whose bold green summit welcome bade,
Then rear'd behind his nodding shade.
Here, as the light boat skimm'd along,
The clarionet, and chosen song,
That mellow, wild, Æolian lay,
"Sweet in the Woodlands," roll'd away,
In echoes down the stream, that bore
Each dying close to every shore,
And forward Cape, and woody range,
That form the never-ceasing change,
To him who floating, void of care,
Twirls with the stream, he knows not where;
Till bold, impressive, and sublime,
Gleam'd all that's left by storms and time

(1) Henry the Seventh gave an irrevocable blow to the dangerous privileges assumed by the barons, in abolishing liveries and retainers, by which every malefactor could shelter himself from the law, on assuming a nobleman's livery, and attending his person. And, as a finishing stroke to the feudal tenures, an act was passed, by which the barons and gentlemen of landed interest were at liberty to sell and mortgage their lands, without fines or licences for the alienation.

Of Goodrich Towers. The mould'ring pile
Tells noble truths,—but dies the while;
O'er the steep path, through brake and briar,
His batter'd turrets still aspire,
In rude magnificence. 'Twas here
Lancastrian Henry spread his cheer,
When came the news that Hal was born,
And Monmouth hail'd the' auspicious morn;
A boy in sports, a prince in war,
Wisdom and valour crown'd his car;
Of France the terror, England's glory,
As Stratford's bard has told the story.

No butler's proxies snore supine,
Where the old monarch kept his wine;
No Welch ox roasting, horns and all,
Adorns his throng'd and laughing hall;
But where he pray'd, and told his beads,
A thriving ash luxuriant spreads.

No wheels by piecemeal brought the pile;
No barks embowell'd Portland Isle;
"Dig," cried Experience, "dig away,
Bring the firm quarry into day;
The excavation still shall save
Those ramparts which its entrails gave."
"Here kings shall dwell," the builders cried;
"Here England's foes shall low'r their pride;
Hither shall suppliant nobles come,
And this be England's royal home."
Vain hope! for on the Gwentian shore,
The regal banner streams no more!
Nettles, and vilest weeds that grow,
To mock poor Grandeur's head laid low,
Creep round the turrets valour raised,
And flaunt where youth and beauty gazed.

Here fain would strangers loiter long,
And muse as Fancy's-woof grows strong;
Yet cold the heart that could complain,
Where Pollett[1] struck his oars again;
For lovely as the sleeping child,
The stream glides on sublimely wild,
In perfect beauty, perfect ease;
The awning trembled in the breeze,

(1) The boatman.

And scarcely trembled, as we stood
For Ruerdean Spire, and Bishop's Wood.
The fair domains of Courtfield [1] made
A paradise of mingled shade
Round Bicknor's tiny church, that cowers
Beneath his host of woodland bowers.

But who the charm of words shall fling,
O'er Raven Cliff and Coldwell Spring,
To brighten the unconscious eye,
And wake the soul to ecstasy?

Noon scorch'd the fields; the boat lay to;
The dripping oars had nought to do,
Where round us rose a scene that might
Enchant an idiot—glorious sight!
Here, in one gay according mind,
Upon the sparkling stream we dined;
As shepherds free on mountain heath,
Free as the fish that watch'd beneath
For falling crumbs, where cooling lay
The wine that cheer'd us on our way.
The' unruffled bosom of the stream,
Gave every tint and every gleam;
Gave shadowy rocks, and clear blue sky,
And double clouds of various dye;
Gave dark green woods, or russet brown,
And pendant corn-fields, upside down.

A troop of gleaners changed their shade,
And 'twas a change by music made;
For slowly to the brink they drew,
To mark our joy, and share it too.
How oft, in Childhood's flow'ry days,
I've heard the wild impassion'd lays
Of such a group, lays strange and new,
And thought, was ever song so true?
When from the hazel's cool retreat,
They watch'd the summer's trembling heat;
And through the boughs rude urchins play'd,
Where matrons, round the laughing maid,

(1) A seat belonging to the family of Vaughan, which is not unnoticed in the pages of history. According to tradition, it is the place where Henry the Fifth was nursed, under the care of the Countess of Salisbury; from which circumstance the original name of Grayfield is said to have been changed to Courtfield: although it is probably an erroneous tradition; for *Court* was a common name for a manor-house, where the lord of the manor held his court.—See Coxe's "Monmouth."

Prest the long grass beneath! And here
They doubtless shared an equal cheer;
Enjoy'd the feast with equal glee,
And raised the song of revelry:
Yet half abash'd, reserved, and shy,
Watch'd till the strangers glided by.

GLEANER'S SONG.

DEAR Ellen, your tales are all plenteously stored,
With the joys of some bride, and the wealth of her lord;
Of her chariots and dresses,
And worldly caresses,
And servants that fly when she's waited upon:
But what can she boast if she weds unbeloved?
Can she e'er feel the joy that one morning I proved,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John?

These fields, my dear Ellen, I knew them of yore,
Yet to me they ne'er look'd so enchanting before;
The distant bells ringing,
The birds round us singing,
For pleasure is pure when affection is won:
They told me the troubles and cares of a wife;
But I loved him; and that was the pride of my life,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John.

He shouted and ran, as he leapt from the stile;
And what in my bosom was passing the while?
For love knows the blessing
Of ardent caressing,
When virtue inspires us, and doubts are all gone.
The sunshine of Fortune you say is divine;
True love and the sunshine of Nature were mine,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John.

Never could spot be suited less
To bear memorials of distress;
None, cries the sage, more fit is found,
They strike at once a double wound;
Humiliation bids you sigh,
And think of Immortality.

Close on the bank, and half o'ergrown,
Beneath a dark wood's sombrous frown,
A monumental stone appears,
Of one who in his blooming years,

While bathing spurn'd the grassy shore,
And sunk, midst friends, to rise no more;
By parents witness'd.—Hark! their shrieks!
The dreadful language Horror speaks!
But why in verse attempt to tell
That tale the stone records so well?[1]
Nothing could damp the' awaken'd joy,
Not e'en thy fate, ingenuous boy;
The great, the grand of Nature strove,
To lift our hearts to Life and Love.

Hail! Coldwell rocks; frown, frown away;
Thrust from your woods your shafts of gray:
Fall not, to crush our mortal pride,
Or stop the stream on which we glide,
Our lives are short, our joys are few;
But, giants, what is time to you?

(1) Inscription on the side towards the water:—

"Sacred to the memory of John Whitehead Warre, who perished near this spot, whilst bathing in the river Wye, in sight of his afflicted parents, brother, and sisters, on the 14th of September, 1804, in the 16th year of his age.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE,

Who, in his mercy, hath granted consolation to the parents of the dear departed, in the reflection that he possessed truth, innocence, filial piety, and fraternal affection, in the highest degree. That, but a few moments before he was called to a better life, he had (with a never-to-be-forgotten piety) joined his family in joyful thanks to his Maker, for the restoration of his mother's health. His parents, in justice to his amiable virtue and excellent disposition, declare that he was void of offence towards them. With humbled hearts they bow to the Almighty's dispensation; trusting, through the mediation of his blessed Son, he will mercifully receive their child he so suddenly took to himself.

"This monument is here erected to warn parents and others how they trust the deceitful stream; and particularly to exhort them to learn and observe the directions of the Humane Society, for the recovery of persons apparently drowned. Alas! it is with the extremest sorrow here commemorated, what anguish is felt from a want of this knowledge. The lamented swam very well; was endowed with great bodily strength and activity; and possibly, had proper application been used, might have been saved from his untimely fate. He was born at Oporto, in the kingdom of Portugal, on the 14th of February, 1789; third son of James Warre, of London, and of the county of Somerset, merchant, and Elinor, daughter of Thomas Gregg, of Belfast, Esq.

"Passenger, whoever thou art, spare this tomb! It is erected for the benefit of the surviving, being but a poor record of the grief of those who witnessed the sad occasion of it. God preserve you and yours from such calamity! May you not require their assistance; but if you should, the apparatus, with directions for the application by the Humane Society, for the saving of persons apparently drowned, are lodged at the church of Coldwell."

On the opposite side is inscribed:—

"It is with gratitude acknowledged by the parents of the deceased, that permission was gratuitously, and most obligingly, granted for the erection of this monument by William Vaughan, Esq., of Courtfield."

Ye who erect, in many a mass,
Rise from the scarcely dimpled glass,
That with distinct and mellow glow,
Reflect your monstrous forms below;
Or in clear shoals, in breeze or sun,
Shake all your shadows into one;
Boast ye o'er man in proud disdain,
An everlasting silent reign?
Bear ye your heads so high in scorn
Of names that puny man hath borne?
Would that the Cambrian bards had here
Their names carved deep, so deep, so clear,
That such as gaily wind along
Might shout and cheer them with a song;
Might rush on wings of bliss away,
Through Fancy's boundless blaze of day!

Not nameless quite ye lift your brows,
For each the navigator knows;
Not by King Arthur, or his knights,
Bard famed in lays, or chief in fights;
But former tourists, just as free,
(Though surely not so blest as we,)
Mark'd towering Bearcroft's ivy crown,
And grey Vansittart's waving gown;
And who's that giant by his side?
"Sergeant Adair," the boatman cried.
Strange may it seem, however true,
That here, where law has nought to do,
Where rules and bonds are set aside,
By wood, by rock, by stream defied;
That here, where nature seems at strife
With all that tells of busy life,
Man should by names be carried still,
To Babylon against his will.

But how shall Memory rehearse,
Or dictate the untoward verse
That Truth demands? Could he refuse
Thy unsought honours, darling Muse,
He who in idle, happy trim,
Rode just where friends would carry him?
Truth, I obey.—The generous band,
That spread his board and grasp'd his hand,

In native mirth, as here they came,
Gave a bluff rock his humble name:
A yew-tree clasps its rugged base;
The boatman knows its reverend face;
And with his memory and his fee,
Rests the result that Time shall see.
Yet e'en if Time shall sweep away
The fragile whimsies of a day;
Or travellers rest the dashing oar,
To hear the mingled echoes roar;
A stranger's triumph—he will feel
A joy that death alone can steal.
And should he cold indifference feign,
And treat such honours with disdain,
Pretending Pride shall not deceive him,
Good people all, pray don't believe him;
In such a spot to leave a name,
At least is no opprobrious Fame;
This rock perhaps uprear'd his brow
Ere human blood began to flow.

And let not wandering strangers fear
That Wye is ended there or here;
Though foliage close, though hills may seem
To bar all access to a stream,
Some airy height he climbs amain,
And finds the silver eel again.

No fears we form'd, no labours counted,
Yet Symmon's Yat must be surmounted;
A tower of rock that seems to cry,
"Go round about me, neighbour Wye."[1]
On went the boat, and up the steep
Her straggling crew began to creep,
To gain the ridge, enjoy the view,
Where the pure gales of summer blew.
The gleaming Wye, that circles round
Her four-mile course, again is found;

(1) This rocky isthmus, perforated at the base, would measure not more than six hundred yards, and its highest point is two thousand feet above the water. If this statement, taken from Coxe's "History of Monmouthshire," and "An Excursion down the Wye," by C. Heath, of Monmouth, is correct, its elevation is greater than that of the "Pen-y-Vale," or the "Sugar-Loaf-Hill," near Abergavenny. Yet it has less the appearance of a mountain than the river has that of an excavation.

And crouching to the conqueror's pride,
Bathes his huge cliffs on either side;
Seen at one glance, when from his brow,
The eye surveys twin gulfs below.

Whence comes thy name? What Simon he,
Who gain'd a monument in thee?
Perhaps a rude woodhunter, born
Peril, and toil, and death, to scorn;
Or warrior, with his powerful lance,
Who scaled the cliff to gain a glance;
Or shepherd lad, or humble swain,
Who sought for pasture here in vain;
Or venerable bard, who strove
To tune his harp to themes of love;
Or with a poet's ardent flame,
Sung to the winds his country's fame?

Westward Great Doward, stretching wide,
Upheaves his iron-bowell'd side;
And by his everlasting mound,
Prescribes the' imprison'd river's bound,
And strikes the eye with mountain force:
But, stranger, mark thy rugged course
From crag to crag, unwilling, slow,
To New Wier forge that smokes below.
Here rush'd the keel—like lightning by;
The helmsman watch'd with anxious eye;
And oars alternate touch'd the brim,
To keep the flying boat in trim.

Forward quick changing, changing still,
Again rose cliff, and wood, and hill,
Where mingling foliage seem'd to strive,
With dark-brown saplings, flay'd alive;[1]
Down to the gulf beneath, where oft
The toiling wood-boy dragg'd aloft
His stubborn faggot from the brim,
And gazed, and tugg'd with sturdy limb;
And where the mind repose would seek,
A barren, storm-defying peak,
The Little Doward lifted high
His rocky crown of royalty.

(1) The custom is here alluded to of stripping the bark from oaks while growing, which gives an almost undescribable, though not the most agreeable, effect to the landscape.

Hush! not a whisper! Oars, be still!
Comes that soft sound from yonder hill?
Or is it close at hand, so near
It scarcely strikes the list'ning ear?
E'en so; for down the green bank fell
An ice-cold stream from Martin's Well,
Bright as young Beauty's azure eye,
And pure as infant Chastity,
Each limpid draught suffused with dew,
The dipping glass's crystal hue;
And as it trembling reach'd the lip,
Delight sprung up at every sip.

Pure, temperate joys, and calm, were these;
We toss'd upon no Indian seas;
No savage chiefs, of various hue,
Came jabbering in the bark canoe,
Our strength to dare, our course to turn;
Yet boats a South Sea chief would burn,[1]
Sculk'd in the alder shade. Each bore,
Devoid of keel, or sail, or oar,
An upright fisherman, whose eye,
With Brahmin-like solemnity,
Survey'd the surface either way,
And cleaved it like a fly at play;
And crossways bore a balanced pole,
To drive the salmon from his hole;
Then heedful leapt, without parade,
On shore, as luck or fancy bade;
And o'er his back, in gallant trim,
Swung the light shell that carried him;
Then down again his burden threw,
And launch'd his whirling bowl anew;
Displaying, in his bow'ry station,
The infancy of navigation.

Soon round us spread the hills and dales,
Where Geoffrey spun his magic tales,
And call'd them history. The land
Whence Arthur sprung, and all his band
Of gallant knights. Sire of Romance,
Who led the Fancy's mazy dance,

(1) In Cæsar's Commentaries, mention is made of boats of this description, formed of a raw hide (from whence, perhaps, their name Coricle), which were in use among the natives. How little they dreamed of the vastness of modern perfection, and of the naval conflicts of latter days!

Thy tales shall please, thy name still be,
When time forgets my verse and me.

Low sunk the sun, his evening beam
Scarce reach'd us on the tranquil stream;
Shut from the world and all its din,
Nature's own bonds had closed us in;
Wood, and deep dell, and rock, and ridge,
From smiling Ross to Monmouth Bridge;
From morn, till twilight stole away,
A long, unclouded, glorious day.

BOOK II.

Henry the Fifth.—Morning on the Water.—Llandoga.—Ballad, "The Maid of Llandoga."—Tintern Abbey.—Wind-Cliff.—Arrival at Chepstow.—Persfield.—Ballad, "Morris of Persfield."—View from Wind-Cliff.—Chepstow Castle by Moonlight.

HARRY of Monmouth, o'er thy page,
Great chieftain of a daring age,
The stripling soldier burns to see
The spot of thy nativity;
His ardent fancy can restore
Thy castle's turrets, now no more;
See the tall plumes of victory wave,
And call old valour from the grave;
Twang the strong bow, and point the lance,
That pierced the shatter'd hosts of France,
When Europe, in the days of yore,
Shook at the rampant lion's roar.

Ten hours were all we could command;
The Boat was moor'd upon the strand,
The midnight current, by her side,
Was stealing down to meet the tide;
The wakeful steersman ready lay,
To rouse us at the break of day;
It came—how soon! and what a sky,
To cheer the bounding traveller's eye!
To make him spurn his couch of rest,
To shout upon the river's breast;
Watching by turns the rosy hue
Of early cloud, or sparkling dew;
These living joys the verse shall tell,
Harry, and Monmouth, fare-ye-well.

On upland farm, and airy height,
Swept by the breeze, and clothed in light,
The reapers, early from their beds,
Perhaps were singing o'er our heads.
For, stranger, deem not that the eye
Could hence survey the eastern sky;

Or mark the streak'd horizon's bound,
Where first the rosy sun wheels round;
Deep in the gulf beneath were we,
Whence climb'd blue mists o'er rock and tree;
A mingling, undulating crowd,
That form'd the dense or fleecy cloud;
Slow from the darken d stream upborne,
They caught the quick'ning gales of morn;
There bade their parent Wye good day,
And tinged with purple sail'd away.

The Munno join'd us all unseen,
Troy House, and Beaufort's bowers of green,
And nameless prospects, half defin'd,
Involved in mist, were left behind.
Yet as the boat still onward bore,
These ramparts of the eastern shore
Cower'd the high crest to many a sweep,
And bade us o'er each minor steep
Mark the bold Kymin's sunny brow
That, gleaming o'er our fogs below,
Lifted amain with giant power,
E'en to the clouds his Naval Tower;[1]
Proclaiming to the morning sky,
Valour, and fame, and victory.

The air resign'd its hazy blue,
Just as Llandoga came in view;
Delightful village; one by one,
Its climbing dwellings caught the sun.
So bright the scene, the air so clear,
Young Love and Joy seem'd station'd here;
And each with floating banners cried,
"Stop, friends, you'll meet the slimy tide."

Rude fragments, torn, disjointed, wild,
High on the Glo'ster shore are piled;
No ruin'd fane, the boast of years,
Unstain'd by time the group appears;
With foaming wrath, and hideous swell,
Brought headlong down a woodland dell,
When a dark thunder-storm had spread
Its terrors round the guilty head;

(1) The Kymin Pavilion, erected in honour of the British Admirals, and their unparalleled victories.

When rocks, earth-bound, themselves gave way,
When crash'd the prostrate timbers lay.
Oh, it had been a noble sight,
Crouching beyond the torrent's might,
To mark the' uprooted victims bow,
The grinding masses dash below,
And hear the long deep peal the while
Burst over Tintern's roofless pile!
Then, as the sun regain'd his power,
When the last breeze from hawthorn bower,
Or Druid oak, had shook away
The rain-drops 'midst the gleaming day,
Perhaps the sigh of hope return'd
And love in some chaste bosom burn'd,
And softly trill'd the stream along,
Some rustic maiden's village song.

THE MAID OF LLANDOGA.

RETURN, my Llewellyn, the glory
That heroes may gain o'er the sea,
Though nations may feel
Their invincible steel,
By falsehood is tarnish'd in story;
Why tarry, Llewellyn, from me?

Thy sails, on the fathomless ocean,
Are swell'd by the boisterous gale;
How rests thy tired head
On the rude rocking bed?
While here not a leaf is in motion,
And melody reigns in the dale.

The mountains of Monmouth invite thee;
The Wye, O how beautiful here!
This woodbine, thine own,
Hath the cottage o'ergrown,
Oh, what foreign shore can delight thee,
And where is the current so clear?

Can lands where false pleasure assails thee,
And beauty invites thee to roam;
Can the deep orange grove
Charm with shadows of love?
Thy love at Llandoga bewails thee;
Remember her truth and thy home.

Adieu, Llandoga, scene most dear,
Farewell we bade to Ethel's Wier;
Round many a point then bore away,
Till morn was changed to beauteous day:
And forward on the lowland shore,
Silent majestic ruins wore
The stamp of Holiness; this strand
The steersman hail'd and touch'd the land.

Sudden the change; at once to tread
The grass-grown mansions of the Dead!
Awful to feeling, where, immense,
Rose ruin'd, gray magnificence;
The fair-wrought shaft all ivy-bound,
The tow'ring arch with foliage crown'd,
That trembles on its brow sublime,
Triumphant o'er the spoils of Time.
Here, grasping all the eye beheld,
Thought into mingling Anguish swell'd,
And check'd the wild excursive wing,
O'er dust or bones of priest or king;
Or raised some Strongbow [1] warrior's ghost
To shout before his banner'd host.
But all was still.—The chequer'd floor
Shall echo to the step no more;
Nor airy roof the strain prolong,
Of vesper chant or choral song.

Tintern, thy name shall hence sustain
A thousand raptures in my brain;
Joys, full of soul, all strength, all eye,
That cannot fade, that cannot die.

No loitering here, lone walks to steal,
Welcome the early hunter's meal;
For time and tide, stern couple, ran
Their endless race, and laugh'd at man;
Deaf, had we shouted, "Turn about!"
Or, "Wait a while, till we come out;"
To humour them we check'd our pride,
And ten cheer'd hearts stow'd side by side;
Push'd from the shore with current strong,
And, "Hey for Chepstow," steer'd along.

1) They show here a mutilated figure, which they call the famous Earl Strongbow; but it appears from Coxe that he was buried at Gloucester.

Amidst the bright expanding day,
Solemnly deep, dark shadows lay,
Of that rich foliage, tow'ring o'er
Where princely abbots dwelt of yore.
The mind, with instantaneous glance,
Beholds his barge of state advance,
Borne proudly down the ebbing tide,
She turns the waving boughs aside;
She winds with flowing pendants drest,
As the current turns south-west,
She strikes her oars, where full in view,
Stupendous Wind-Cliff greets his crew.
But, Fancy, let thy day-dreams cease,
With fallen greatness be at peace;
Enough; for Wind-Cliff still was found
To hail us as we doubled round.

Bold in primeval strength he stood;
His rocky brow, all shagg'd with wood,
O'erlook'd his base, where, doubling strong,
The inward torrent pours along;
Then ebbing turns, and turns again,
To meet the Severn and the Main,
Beneath the dark shade sweeping round,
Of beetling Persfield's fairy ground,
By buttresses of rock upborne,
The rude Apostles all unshorn.

Long be the slaught'ring axe defied;
Long may they bear their waving pride;
Tree over tree, bower over bower,
In uncurb'd nature's wildest power;
Till Wye forgets to wind below,
And genial spring to bid them grow.

And shall we e'er forget the day,
When our last chorus died away?
When first we hail'd, then moor'd beside
Rock-founded Chepstow's mouldering pride?
Where that strange bridge,[1] light, trembling high,
Strides like a spider o'er the Wye;

(1) "On my arrival at Chepstow," says Mr. Coxe, "I walked to the bridge; it was low water, and I looked down on the river ebbing between forty and fifty feet beneath: six hours after it rose near forty feet, almost reached the floor of the bridge, and flowed upward with great rapidity. The channel in this place being narrow in proportion to the Severn, and confined between perpendicular cliffs, the great rise and fall of the river are peculiarly manifest."

When, for the joys the morn had given,
Our thankful hearts were raised to Heaven?
Never;—that moment shall be dear,
While hills can charm, or sunbeams cheer.

Pollett, farewell! Thy dashing oar
Shall lull us into peace no more;
But where Kyrl trimm'd his infant green,
Long mayst thou with thy bark be seen;
And happy be the hearts that glide
Through such a scene, with such a guide.

The verse of gravel-walks that tells,
With pebble rocks and mole-hill swells,
May strain description's bursting cheeks,
And far outrun the goal it seeks.
Not so when ev'ning's purpling hours
Hied us away to Persfield bowers:
Here no such danger waits the lay,
Sing on, and truth shall lead the way;
Here sight may range, and hearts may glow,
Yet shrink from the abyss below;
Here echoing precipices roar,
As youthful ardour shouts before;
Here a sweet paradise shall rise
At once to greet poetic eyes.
Then why does he dispel, unkind,
The sweet illusion from the mind,
That giant, with the goggling eye,
Who strides in mock sublimity?
Giants, identified, may frown,
Nature and taste would knock them down;
Blocks that usurp some noble station,
As if to curb imagination,
That, smiling at the chisel's pow'r,
Makes better monsters every hour.

Beneath impenetrable green,
Down midst the hazel stems was seen
The turbid stream, with all that past;
The lime-white deck, the gliding mast;
Or skiff with gazers darting by,
Who raised their hands in ecstasy.
Impending cliffs hung overhead;
The rock-path sounded to the tread,

Where twisted roots, in many a fold,
Through moss, disputed room for hold.

The stranger thus who steals one hour
To trace thy walks from bower to bower,
Thy noble cliffs, thy wild-wood joys,
Nature's own work that never cloys,
Who, while reflection bids him roam,
Exclaims not, "Persfield is my home,"
Can ne'er, with dull unconscious eye,
Leave them behind without a sigh.
Thy tale of truth then, Sorrow, tell,
Of one who bade this home farewell;
Morris of Persfield.—Hark, the strains!
Hark, 'tis some Monmouth bard complains!
The deeds, the worth, he knew so well,
The force of nature bids him tell.

MORRIS OF PERSFIELD.

WHO was lord of yon beautiful seat;
Yon woods which are tow'ring so high?
Who spread the rich board for the great,
Yet listen'd to pity's soft sigh?
Who gave alms with a spirit so free?
Who succour'd distress at his door?
Our Morris of Persfield was he,
Who dwelt in the hearts of the poor.

But who e'en of wealth shall make sure,
Since wealth to misfortune has bow'd?
Long cherish'd, untainted and pure,
The stream of his charity flow'd.
But all his resources gave way,
O, what could his feelings control?
What shall curb, in the prosperous day,
The' excess of a generous soul?

He bade an adieu to the town,
O, can I forget the sad day?
When I saw the poor widows kneel down,
To bless him, to weep and to pray.
Though sorrow was mark'd in his eye,
This trial he manfully bore;
Then pass'd o'er the bridge of the Wye,
To return to his Persfield no more.

Yet surely another may feel,
And poverty still may be fed;
I was one who rung out the dumb peal,
For to us noble Morris was dead.
He had not lost sight of his home,
Yon domain that so lovely appears,
When he heard it, and sunk overcome;
He could feel, and he burst into tears.

The lessons of Prudence have charms,
And slighted, may lead to distress;
But the man whom Benevolence warms,
Is an angel who lives but to bless.
If ever man merited fame,
If ever man's failings went free,
Forgot at the sound of his name,
Our Morris of Persfield was he.[1]

Cleft from the summit, who shall say
When Wind-Cliff's other half gave way?
Or when the sea-waves roaring strong,
First drove the rock-bound tide along?
To studious leisure be resign'd,
The task that leads the wilder'd mind
From time's first birth throughout the range
Of Nature's everlasting change.
Soon from his all-commanding brow,
Lay Persfield's rocks and woods below,

Back over Monmouth who could trace
The Wye's fantastic mountain race?
Before us, sweeping far and wide,
Lay out-stretch'd Severn's ocean tide,
Through whose blue mists, all upward blown,
Broke the faint lines of heights unknown;
And still, though clouds would interpose,
The Cotswold promontories rose
In dark succession: Stinchcomb's brow,
With Berkley Castle crouch'd below;
And stranger spires on either hand,
From Thornbury, on the Glo'ster strand;
With black-brow'd woods, and yellow fields,
The boundless wealth that summer yields,

(1) The author is equally indebted to Mr. Coxe's County History for this anecdote, as for the greater part of the notes subjoined throughout the journal

Detain'd the eye, that glanced again
O'er Kingroad anchorage to the main.
Or was the bounded view preferr'd,
Far, far beneath the spreading herd
Low'd as the cow-boy stroll'd along,
And cheerly sung his last new song.
But cow-boy, herd, and tide, and spire,
Sunk into gloom, the tinge of fire,
As westward roll'd the setting day,
Fled like a golden dream away.
Then Chepstow's ruin'd fortress caught
The mind's collected store of thought,
And seem'd, with mild but jealous frown,
To promise peace, and warn us down.
'Twas well; for he has much to boast,
Much still that tells of glories lost,
Though rolling years have form'd the sod,
Where once the bright-helm'd warrior trod
From tower to tower, and gazed around,
While all beneath him slept profound.
E'en on the walls where paced the brave,
High o'er his crumbling turrets wave
The rampant seedlings.—Not a breath
Pass'd through their leaves; when, still as death,
We stopp'd to watch the clouds—for night
Grew splendid with increasing light,
Till, as time loudly told the hour,
Gleam'd the broad front of Marten's Tower,[1]
Bright silver'd by the moon.—Then rose
The wild notes sacred to repose;
Then the lone owl awoke from rest,
Stretch'd his keen talons, plumed his crest,
And from his high embattled station,
Hooted a trembling salutation.
Rocks caught the "halloo" from his tongue,
And Persfield back the echoes flung
Triumphant o'er the' illustrious dead,
Their history lost, their glories fled.

(1) Henry Marten, whose signature appears upon the death-warrant of Charles the First, finished his days here in prison. Marten lived to the advanced age of seventy-eight, and died by a stroke of apoplexy, which seized him while he was at dinner, in the twentieth year of his confinement. He was buried in the chancel of the parish church at Chepstow. Over his ashes was placed a stone with an inscription, which remained there until one of the succeeding vicars, declaring his abhorrence that the monument of a rebel should stand so near the altar, removed the stone into the body of the church!

BOOK III.

Departure for Ragland.—Ragland Castle.—Abergavenny.—Expedition up the "Pen-y-Vale," or Sugar-Loaf Hill.—Invocation to the Spirit of Burns.—View from the Mountain.—Castle of Abergavenny.—Departure for Brecon.—Pembrokes of Crickhowel.—Tre-Tower Castle.—Jane Edwards.

PEACE to your white-wall'd cots, ye vales,
Untainted fly your summer gales;
Health, thou from cities lov'st to roam,
O make the Monmouth hills your home!
Great spirits of her bards of yore,
While harvests triumph, torrents roar,
Train her young shepherds, train them high
To sing of mountain liberty:
Give them the harp and modest maid;
Give them the sacred village shade.
Long be Llandenny, and Llansoy,
Names that import a rural joy;
Known to our fathers, when May-day
Brush'd a whole twelvemonth's cares away.

Oft on the lisping infant's tongue
Reluctant information hung,
Till, from a belt of woods full grown,
Arose immense thy turrets brown,
Majestic Ragland! Harvests wave
Where thund'ring hosts their watchword gave,
When cavaliers, with downcast eye,
Struck the last flag of Loyalty;[1]
Then, left by gallant Worc'ster's band,
To devastation's cruel hand,
The beauteous fabric bow'd, fled all
The splendid hours of festival.
No smoke ascends; the busy hum
Is heard no more; no rolling drum,

(1) This castle, with a garrison commanded by the Marquis of Worcester, was the last place of strength which held out for the unfortunate Charles the First.

No high-toned clarion sounds alarms,
No banner wakes the pride of arms;[1]
But ivy, creeping year by year,
Of growth enormous, triumphs here.
Each dark festoon with pride upheaves
Its glossy wilderness of leaves
On sturdy limbs, that, clasping, bow
Broad o'er the turret's utmost brow,
Encompassing, by strength alone,
In fret-work bars, the sliding stone,
That tells how years and storms prevail,
And spreads its dust upon the gale.

The man who could unmoved survey
What Ruin, piecemeal, sweeps away;
Works of the powerful and the brave,
All sleeping in the silent grave;
Unmoved reflect that here were sung
Carols of joy by Beauty's tongue,
Is fit, where'er he deigns to roam,
And hardly fit—to stay at home.
Spent here in peace one solemn hour,
'Midst legends of the Yellow Tower,
Truth and Tradition's mingled stream,
Fear's start, and Superstition's dream,[2]
Is pregnant with a thousand joys,
That distance, place, nor time destroys;
That with exhaustless stores supply
Food for reflection till we die.

Onward the rested steeds pursued
The cheerful route, with strength renew'd,
For onward lay the gallant town,
Whose name old custom hath clipp'd down,

(1) "These magnificent ruins, including the citadel, occupy a tract of ground not less than one-third of a mile in circumference. In addition to the injury the castle sustained from the parliamentary army, considerable dilapidations have been occasioned by the numerous tenants in the vicinity, who conveyed away the stone and other materials for the construction of farm-houses, barns, and other buildings. No less than twenty-three stair cases were taken down by these devastators; but the present Duke of Beaufort no sooner succeeded to his estate, than he instantly gave orders that not a stone should be moved from its situation, and thus preserved these noble ruins from destruction."—*History of Monmouthshire*, p. 148.

(2) A village woman, who very officiously pointed out all that she knew respecting the former state of the castle, desired us to remark the descent to a vault, apparently of large dimensions, in which she had heard that no candle would continue burning; "and," added she, "they say it is because of the damps; but, for my part, I think the devil is there."

With more of music left than many,
So handily to Abergany.
And as the sidelong, sober light
Left valleys darken'd, hills less bright,
Great Blorenge rose to tell his tale;
And the dun peak of Pen-y-Vale
Stood like a sentinel, whose brow
Scowl'd on the sleeping world below;
Yet even sleep itself outspread
The mountain paths we meant to tread,
'Midst fresh'ning gales all unconfin'd,
Where Usk's broad valley shrinks behind.

Joyous the crimson morning rose,
As joyous from the night's repose
Sprung the light heart, the glancing eye
Beheld, amidst the dappled sky,
Exulting Pen-y-Vale. But how
Could females climb his gleaming brow,
Rude toil encount'ring? how defy
The wintry torrent's course, when dry,
A rough-scoop'd bed of stones? or meet
The powerful force of August heat?
Wheels might assist, could wheels be found
Adapted to the rugged ground:
'Twas done; for prudence bade us start
With three Welsh ponies, and a cart;
A red-cheek'd mountaineer,[1] a wit,
Full of rough shafts, that sometimes hit,
Trudged by their side, and twirl'd his thong,
And cheer'd his scrambling team along.

At ease to mark a scene so fair,
And treat their steeds with mountain air,
Some rode apart, or led before,
Rock after rock the wheels upbore;
The careful driver slowly sped,
To many a bough we duck'd the head,
And heard the wild inviting calls
Of summer's tinkling waterfalls,
In wooded glens below; and still,
At every step the sister hill,

(1) The driver, Powell, I believe, occupied a cottage, or small farm, which we passed during the ascent, and where goats' milk was offered for refreshment.

Blorenge, grew greater, half unseen
At times from out our bowers of green,
That telescopic landscapes made,
From the arch'd windows of its shade;
For woodland tracts begirt us round;
The vale beyond was fairy ground,
That verse can never paint. Above
Gleam'd something like the mount of Jove,
(But how much let the learned say
Who take Olympus in their way)
Gleam'd the fair, sunny, cloudless peak
That simple strangers ever seek.
And are they simple? Hang the dunce
Who would not doff his cap at once
In ecstasy, when, bold and new,
Bursts on his sight a mountain view.

Though vast the prospect here became,
Intensely as the love of fame
Glow'd the strong hope, that strange desire,
That deathless wish of climbing higher,
Where heather clothes his graceful sides,
Which many a scatter'd rock divides,
Bleach'd by more years than Hist'ry knows,
Moved by no power but melting snows,
Or gushing springs, that wash away
The' embedded earth that forms their stay.
The heart distends, the whole frame feels,
Where, inaccessible to wheels,
The utmost storm-worn summit spreads
Its rocks grotesque, its downy beds;
Here no false feeling sense belies,
Man lifts the weary foot, and sighs;
Laughter is dumb; hilarity
Forsakes at once the' astonish'd eye;
E'en the closed lip, half useless grown,
Drops but a word, "Look down; look down."

Good Heav'ns! must scenes like these expand,
Scenes so magnificently grand,
And millions breathe, and pass away,
Unbless'd, throughout their little day,
With one short glimpse? By place confined,
Shall many an anxious ardent mind,

Sworn to the Muses, cow'r its pride,
Doom'd but to sing with pinions tied?
Spirit of Burns! the daring child
Of glorious freedom, rough and wild,
How have I wept o'er all thy ills,
How blest thy Caledonian hills!
How almost worshipp'd in my dreams
Thy mountain haunts,—thy classic streams!
How burnt with hopeless, aimless fire,
To mark thy giant strength aspire
In patriot themes! and tuned the while
Thy "Bonny Doon," or "Balloch Mile."
Spirit of Burns! accept the tear
That rapture gives thy mem'ry here
On the bleak mountain top. Here thou
Thyself had raised the gallant brow
Of conscious intellect, to twine
The' imperishable verse of thine,
That charm'st the world. Or can it be,
That scenes like these were nought to thee?
That Scottish hills so far excel,
That so deep sinks the Scottish dell,
That boasted Pen-y-Vale had been[1]
For thy loud northern lyre too mean;
Broad-shoulder'd Blorenge a mere knoll;
And Skyrid, let him smile or scowl,
A dwarfish bully, vainly proud
Because he breaks the passing cloud?
If even so, thou Bard of Fame,
The consequences rest the same:
For, grant that to thy infant sight
Rose mountains of stupendous height;
Or grant that Cambrian minstrels taught
'Mid scenes that mock the Lowland thought;
Grant that old Talliesin flung
His thousand raptures, as he sung
From huge Plynlimon's awful brow,
Or Cader Idris, capt with snow;
Such Alpine scenes with them or thee
Well suited.—These are Alps to me.

(1) The respective heights of these mountains above the mouth of the Gavany, was taken barometrically by General Roy:—

	Feet.
The summit of the Sugar-Loaf	1852
Of the Blorenge	1720
Of the Skyrid	1498

Long did we, noble Blorenge, gaze
On thee, and mark the eddying haze
That strove to reach thy level crown,
From the rich stream, and smoking town;
And oft, old Skyrid, hail'd thy name,
Nor dared deride thy holy fame.[1]
Long follow'd with untiring eye
The' illumined clouds, that o'er the sky
Drew their thin veil, and slowly sped,
Dipping to every mountain's head,
Dark-mingling, fading, wild, and thence,
Till admiration, in suspense,
Hung on the verge of sight. Then sprung
By thousands known, by thousands sung,
Feelings that earth and time defy,
That cleave to immortality.

A light gray haze enclosed us round;
Some momentary drops were found,
Borne on the breeze; soon all dispell'd;
Once more the glorious prospect swell'd
Interminably fair.[2] Again
Stretch'd the Black Mountain's dreary chain;
When eastward turn'd the straining eye,
Great Malvern met the cloudless sky:
Southward arose the' embattled shores,
Where Ocean in his fury roars,
And rolls abrupt his fearful tides,
Far still from Mendip's fern-clad sides;
From whose vast range of mingling blue,
The weary, wand'ring sight withdrew,
O'er fair Glamorgan's woods and downs,
O'er glitt'ring streams, and farms, and towns,
Back to the Table Rock, that low'rs
O'er old Crickhowel's ruin'd tow'rs.

Here perfect stillness reign'd. The breath
A moment hush'd, 'twas mimic death.
The ear, from all assaults released,
As motion, sound, and life, had ceased.

(1) There still remains on the summit of the Skyrid, or St. Michael's Mount, the foundation of an ancient chapel, to which the inhabitants formerly ascended on Michaelmas Eve, in a kind of pilgrimage. A prodigious cleft, or separation in the hill, tradition says, was caused by the earthquake at the crucifixion; it was therefore termed the Holy Mountain.

(2) This hill commands a view of the counties of Radnor, Salop, Brecknock, Glamorgan, Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester, Somerset, and Wilts.

The beetle rarely murmur'd by,
No sheep-dog sent his voice so high,
Save when, by chance, far down the steep,
Crept a live speck, a straggling sheep;
Yet one lone object, plainly seen,
Curved slowly, in a line of green,
On the brown heath: no demon fell,
No wizard foe, with magic spell,
To chain the senses, chill the heart,
No wizard guided Powel's cart;
He of our nectar had the care,
All our ambrosia rested there.
At leisure, but reluctant still,
We join'd him by a mountain rill;
And there, on springing turf, all seated,
Jove's guests were never half so treated;
Journeys they had, and feastings many,
But never came to Abergany;
Lucky escape:—the wrangling crew,
Mischief to cherish, or to brew,
Was all their sport: and when, in rage,
They chose 'midst warriors to engage,
"Our chariots of fire," they cried,
And dash'd the gates of heav'n aside,
Whirl'd through the air, and foremost stood
'Midst mortal passions, mortal blood,
Celestial power with earthly mix'd;
Gods by the arrow's point transfix'd!
Beneath us frown'd no deadly war,
And Powel's wheels were safer far;
As on them, without flame or shield,
Or bow to twang, or lance to wield,
We left the heights of inspiration,
And relish'd a mere mortal station;
Our object, not to fire a town,
Or aid a chief, or knock him down;
But safe to sleep from war and sorrow,
And drive to Brecknock on the morrow.

Heavy and low'ring, crowds on crowds,
Drove adverse hosts of dark'ning clouds
Low o'er the vale, and far away,
Deep gloom o'erspread the rising day;
No morning beauties caught the eye,
O'er mountain top, or stream, or sky,

As round the castle's ruin'd tower,
We mused for many a solemn hour;
And, half-dejected, half in spleen,
Computed idly, o'er the scene,
How many murders there had dyed
Chiefs and their minions, slaves of pride;
When perjury, in every breath,
Pluck'd the huge falchion from its sheath,
And prompted deeds of ghastly fame,
That Hist'ry's self might blush to name.[1]

At length, through each retreating shower,
Burst, with a renovating power,
Light, life, and gladness; instant fled
All contemplations on the dead.

Who hath not mark'd, with inward joy,
The efforts of the diving boy;
And, waiting while he disappear'd,
Exulted, trembled, hoped, and fear'd?
Then felt his heart, 'midst cheering cries,
Bound with delight to see him rise?
Who hath not burnt with rage, to see
Falsehood's vile cant, and supple knee;
Then hail'd, on some courageous brow,
The power that works her overthrow;
That, swift as lightning, seals her doom,
With, "Miscreant, vanish!—Truth is come?"
So Pen-y-Vale upheaved his brow,
And left the world of fog below;
So Skyrid, smiling, broke his way
To glories of the conqu'ring day;
With matchless grace, and giant pride,
So Blorenge turn'd the clouds aside,
And warn'd us, not a whit too soon,
To chase the flying car of noon,
Where herds and flocks unnumber'd fed,
Where Usk her wand'ring mazes led.

Here on the mind, with powerful sway,
Press'd the bright joys of yesterday;
For still, though doom'd no more to' inhale
The mountain air of Pen-y-Vale,

(1) In Jones's "History of Brecknockshire," the castle of Abergavenny is noticed as having been the scene of the most shocking enormities.

His broad dark-skirting woods o'erhung
Cottage and farm, where careless sung
The labourer, where the gazing steer
Low'd to the mountains, deep and clear.

Slow less'ning Blorenge, left behind,
Reluctantly his claims resign'd,
And stretch'd his glowing front entire,
As forward peep'd Crickhowel spire;
But no proud castle turrets gleam'd;
No warrior Earl's gay banner stream'd;
E'en of thy palace, grief to tell!
A tower without a dinner-bell;
An arch where jav'lin'd sentries bow'd
Low to their chief, or fed the crowd,
Are all that mark where once a train
Of barons graced thy rich domain,
Illustrious Pembroke![1] drain'd thy bowl,
And caught the nobleness of soul,
The harp-inspired, indignant blood
That prompts to arms and hardihood.

To muse upon the days gone by,
Where Desolation meets the eye,
Is double life: Truth, cheaply bought,
The nurse of Sense, the food of Thought,
Whence judgment, ripen'd, forms, at will,
Her estimates of good or ill;
And brings contrasted scenes to view,
And weighs the old rogues with the new;
Imperious tyrants, gone to dust,
With tyrants whom the world hath cursed
Through modern ages. By what power
Rose the strong walls of old Tre Tower?
Deep in the valley, whose clear rill
Then stole through wilds, and wanders still
Through village shades, unstain'd with gore,
Where war-steeds bathe their hoofs no more.

Empires have fallen, armies bled,
Since yon old wall, with upright head,
Met the loud tempest; who can trace
When first the rude mass, from its base,

(1) Part of the original palace of the powerful Earls of Pembroke is still undemolished by time.

Stoop'd in that dreadful form? E'en thou,
Jane, with the placid silver brow,
Know'st not the day, though thou hast seen
An hundred [1] springs of cheerful green,
An hundred winters' snows increase
That brook, the emblem of thy peace.
Most venerable dame! and shall
The plund'rer, in his gorgeous hall,
His fame, with Moloch-frown prefer,
And scorn thy harmless character?
Who scarcely hear'st of his renown,
And never sack'd nor burnt a town;
But should he crave, with coward cries,
To be Jane Edwards when he dies,
Thou'lt be the conqueror, old lass,
So take thy alms, and let us pass.

Forth from the calm sequester'd shade,
Once more approaching twilight bade;
When, as the sigh of joy arose,
And while e'en fancy sought repose,
One vast transcendent object sprung,
Arresting every eye and tongue;
Strangers, fair Brecon, wond'ring, scan
The peaks of thy stupendous Vann:
But how can strangers, chain'd by time,
Through floating clouds his summit climb?
Another day had almost fled;
A clear horizon, glowing red,
Its promise on all hearts impress'd,
Bright sunny hours, and Sabbath rest.

(1) Jane Edwards, or as she pronounced it. *Eiwarts*, a tall, bony, upright woman, leaning both hands on the head of her stick, and in her manners venerably impressive, was then at the age of one hundred. She was living in 1809, then one hundred and two.

BOOK IV.

The Gaer, a Roman Station.—Brunless Castle.—The Hay.—Funeral Song, "Mary's Grave."—Clifford Castle.—Return by Hereford, Malvern Hills, Cheltenham, and Gloucester, to Uley.—Conclusion.

'Tis sweet to hear the soothing chime,
And, by thanksgiving, measure time;
When hard-wrought Poverty awhile
Upheaves the bending back to smile;
When servants hail, with boundless glee,
The sweets of love and liberty;
For guiltless love will ne'er disown
The cheerful Sunday's market town,
Clean, silent, when his power 's confess'd,
And trade's contention lull'd to rest

Seldom has worship cheer'd my soul
With such invincible control!
It was a bright benignant hour,
The song of praise was full of power;
And, darting from the noon-day sky,
Amidst the tide of harmony,
O'er aisle and pillar glancing strong,
Heaven's radiant light inspired the song.
The word of peace, that can disarm
Care with its own peculiar charm,
Here flow'd a double stream, to cheer
The Saxon[1] and the Mountaineer,
Of various stock, of various name,
Now join'd in rites and join'd in fame.

Ye who Religion's duty teach,
What constitutes a Sabbath breach?
Is it, when joy the bosom fills,
To wander o'er the breezy hills?

(1) Divine service is performed alternately in English and Welsh. That they still call us Saxons, need hardly be mentioned. I observed the army to be equally as accommodating as the church; for the posting-bills for recruits are printed in both languages.

Is it, to trace around your home
The footsteps of imperial Rome?
Then guilty, guilty let us plead,
Who, on the cheerful rested steed,
In thought absorb'd, explored, with care,
The wild lanes round the silent Gaer,[1]
Where conquering eagles took their stand;
Where heathen altars stain'd the land;
Where soldiers of Augustus pined,
Perhaps, for pleasures left behind,
And measured, from this lone abode,
The new-form'd, stony, forest road,
Back to Caerleon's southern train,
Their barks, their home, beyond the main;
Still by the Vann reminded strong
Of Alpine scenes, and mountain song,
The olive groves, and cloudless sky,
And golden vales of Italy.

With us 'twas peace, we met no foes;
With us far different feelings rose.
Still onward inclination bade;
The wilds of Mona's Druid shade,
Snowdon's sublime and stormy brow,
His land of Britons stretch'd below,
And Penman Mawr's huge crags, that greet
The thundering ocean at his feet,
Were all before us. Hard it proved,
To quit a land so dearly loved:
Forego each bold terrific boast
Of northern Cambria's giant coast.
Friends of the harp and song, forgive
The deep regret, that, whilst I live,
Shall dwell upon my heart and tongue;
Go, joys untasted, themes unsung,

(1) A road must have led from Abergavenny, through the Vale of the Usk, north-west to the "Gaer," situated two miles north-west of Brecon, on a gentle eminence, at the conflux of the rivers Esker and Usk. Mr. Wyndham traced parts of walls, which he describes as exactly resembling those at Caerleon; and Mr. Lemon found several bricks, bearing the inscription of LEG. II. AVG.—*Coxe.*

In addition to the above, it may be acceptable to state, that Mr. Price, a very intelligent farmer on the spot, has in his possession several of the above kind of bricks, bearing the same inscription, done, evidently, by stamping the clay, while moist, with an instrument. These have been turned up by the plough, together with several small Roman lamps.

Another scene, another land,
Hence shall the homeward verse demand.
Yet Fancy wove her flow'ry chain,
Till "Farewell, Brecon!" left a pain;
A pain that travellers may endure,
Change is their food, and change their cure.
Yet, oh, how dream-like, far away,
To recollect so bright a day;
Dream-like those scenes the townsmen love,
Their tumbling Usk, their Priory Grove,
View'd while the moon cheer'd, calmly bright,
The freshness of a summer's night.

High o'er the town, in morning smiles,
The blue Vann heaved his deep defiles;
And ranged, like champions for the fight,
Basking in sunbeams on our right,
Rose the Black Mountains, that surround
That far-famed spot of holy ground,
Llanthony, dear to monkish tale,
And still the pride of Ewais Vale.
No road-side cottage smoke was seen,
Or rarely, on the village green
No youths appear'd, in spring-tide dress,
In ardent play, or idleness.
Brown waved the harvest, dale and slope
Exulting bore a nation's hope;
Sheaves rose as far as sight could range,
And every mile was but a change
Of peasants lab'ring, lab'ring still,
And climbing many a distant hill.
Some talk'd, perhaps, of spring's bright hour,
And how they piled, in Brunless Tower,[1]
The full-dried hay. Perhaps they told
Tradition's tales, and taught how old
The ruin'd castle! False or true,
They guess it, just as others do.

Lone tower! though suffer'd yet to stand,
Dilapidation's wasting hand
Shall tear thy pond'rous walls, to guard
The slumb'ring steed, or fence the yard;
Or wheels shall grind thy pride away
Along the turnpike road to Hay,

(1) The only remaining tower of Brunless Castle now makes an excellent hay-loft; and almost every building on the spot is composed of fragments.

Where fierce Glendow'r's rude mountaineers
Left war's attendants, blood and tears,
And spread their terrors many a mile,
And shouted round the flaming pile.
May Heaven preserve our native land
From blind Ambition's murdering hand;
From all the wrongs that can provoke
A people's wrath, and urge the stroke
That shakes the proudest throne! Guard, Heaven,
The sacred birthright thou hast given;
Bid justice curb, with strong control,
The desp'rate passions of the soul.

Here ivied fragments, lowering, throw
Broad shadows on the poor below,
Who, while they rest, and when they die,
Sleep on the rock-built shores of Wye.

To tread o'er nameless mounds of earth,
To muse upon departed worth,
To credit still the poor distress'd,
For feelings never half express'd,
Their hopes, their faith, their tender love,
Faith that sustain'd, and hope that strove,
Is sacred joy; to heave a sigh,
A debt to poor mortality.
Funereal rites are closed; 'tis done;
Ceased is the bell; the priest is gone;
What then if bust or stone denies
To catch the pensive loit'rer's eyes,
What course can poverty pursue?
What can the poor pretend to do?
O boast not, quarries, of your store;
Boast not, O man, of wealth, or lore,
The flowers of nature here shall thrive,
Affection keep those flowers alive;
And they shall strike the melting heart,
Beyond the utmost power of art;
Planted on graves,[1] their stems entwine,
And every blossom is a line

(1) To the custom of scattering flowers over the graves of departed friends, David ap Gwillym beautifully alludes in one of his odes:—"O whilst thy season of flowers, and thy tender sprays thick of leaves remain, I will pluck the roses from the brakes, the flowerets of the meads, and gems of the wood; the vivid trefoil, beauties of the ground, and the gaily-smiling bloom of the verdant herbs, to be offered to the memory of a chief of fairest fame.

Indelibly impress'd, that tends,
In more than language comprehends,
To teach us, in our solemn hours,
That we ourselves are dying flowers.

What if a father buried here
His earthly hope, his friend most dear,
His only child? Shall his dim eye,
At poverty's command, be dry?
No, he shall muse, and think, and pray,
And weep his tedious hours away;
Or weave the song of woe, to tell
How dear that child he loved so well.

MARY'S GRAVE.

No child have I left, I must wander alone,
No light-hearted Mary to sing as I go,
Nor loiter to gather bright flowers newly blown;
She delighted, sweet maid, in these emblems of woe.
Then the stream glided by her, or playfully boil'd
O'er its rock-bed unceasing, and still it goes free;
But her infant life was arrested, unsoil'd
As the dew-drop when shook by the wing of the bee.

Sweet flowers were her treasures, and flowers shall be mine;
I bring them from Radnor's green hills to her grave;
Thus planted in anguish, oh, let them entwine
O'er a heart once as gentle as Heaven e'er gave.
Oh, the glance of her eye, when at mansions of wealth
I pointed, suspicious, and warn'd her of harm;
She smiled in content, midst the bloom of her health,
And closer and closer still hung on my arm.

What boots it to tell of the sense she possess'd,
The fair buds of promise that mem'ry endears?
The mild dove, affection, was queen of her breast,
And I had her love, and her truth, and her tears;
She was mine. But she goes to the land of the good,
A change which I must, and yet dare not deplore;
I'll bear the rude shock like the oak of the wood,
But the green hills of Radnor will charm me no more.

Humbly will I lay them on the grave of Ivor." On a grave in the churchyard at Hay, or "The Hay," as it is commonly spoken, flowers had evidently been planted, but only one solitary sprig of sweetbrier had taken root.

Ruins of greatness, all farewell;
No Chepstows here, no Raglands tell,
By mound, or foss, or mighty tower,
Achievements high in hall or bower;
Or give to Fancy's vivid eye,
The helms and plumes of Chivalry.
Clifford has fall'n, howe'er sublime,
Mere fragments wrestle still with Time;
Yet as they perish, sure and slow,
And rolling dash the stream below,
They raise tradition's glowing scene,
The clue of silk, the wrathful queen,
And link, in mem'ry's firmest bond,
The love-lorn tale of Rosamond.

How placid, how divinely sweet,
The flow'r-grown brook that, by our feet,
Winds on a summer's day: e'en where
Its name no classic honours share,
Its springs untraced, its course unknown,
Seaward for ever rambling down!
Here, then, how sweet, pellucid, chaste;
'Twas this bright current bade us taste
The fulness of its joy. Glide still,
Enchantress of Plynlimon Hill,
Meandering Wye! Still let me dream,
In raptures, o'er thy infant stream;
For could the' immortal soul forego
Its cumbrous load of earthly woe,
And clothe itself in fairy guise,
Too small, too pure, for human eyes,
Blithe would we seek thy utmost spring,
Where mountain-larks first try the wing;
There, at the crimson dawn of day,
Launch a scoop'd leaf, and sail away,
Stretch'd at our ease, or crouch below,
Or climb the green transparent prow,
Stooping where oft the blue-bell sips
The passing stream, and shakes and dips;
And when the heifer came to drink,
Quick from the gale our bark would shrink,
And huddle down amidst the brawl
Of many a five-inch waterfall,

(1) Clifford Castle is supposed to have been the birth-place of Fair Rosamond.

Till the expanse should fairly give
The bow'ring hazel room to live;
And as each swelling junction came,
To form a riv'let worth a name,
We'd dart beneath, or brush away
Long-beaded webs, that else might stay
Our silent course; in haste retreat,
Where whirlpools near the bulrush meet;
Wheel round the ox of monstrous size;
And count below his shadowy flies;
And sport amidst the throng; and when
We met the barks of giant men,
Avoid their oars, still undescried,
And mock their overbearing pride;
Then vanish by some magic spell,
And shout, "Delicious Wye, farewell!"

'Twas noon, when o'er thy mountain stream
The carriage roll'd, each pow'rful gleam
Struck on thy surface, where, below,
Spread the deep heaven's azure glow;
And water-flowers, a mingling crowd,
Waved in the dazzling silver cloud.
Again farewell! The treat is o'er;
For me shall Cambria smile no more;
Yet truth shall still the song sustain,
And touch the springs of joy again.

Hail! land of cider, vales of health!
Redundant fruitage, rural wealth;
Here, did Pomona still retain
Her influence o'er a British plain,
Might temples rise, spring blossoms fly,
Round the capricious deity;
Or autumn sacrifices bound,
By myriads, o'er the hallow'd ground,
And deep libations still renew
The fervours of her dancing crew.
Land of delight! let mem'ry strive
To keep thy flying scenes alive;
Thy grey-limb'd orchards, scattering wide
Their treasures by the highway side;
Thy half-hid cottages, that show
The dark-green moss, the resting bough,

At broken panes, that taps and flies,
Illumes and shades the maiden's eyes
At day-break, and, with whisper'd joy,
Wakes the light-hearted shepherd boy:
These, with thy noble woods and dells,
The hazel copse, the village bells,
Charm'd more the passing sultry hours
Than Hereford, with all her towers.

Sweet was the rest, with welcome cheer,
But a far nobler scene was near;
And when the morrow's noon had spread,
O'er orchard stores, the deep'ning red,
Behind us rose the billowy cloud,
That dims the air to city crowd.

And deem not that, where cider reigns
The beverage of a thousand plains,
Malt, and the liberal harvest horn,
Are all unknown, or laugh'd to scorn;
A spot that all delights might bring,
A palace for an eastern king,
Canfrome,[1] shall from her vaults display
John Barleycorn's resistless sway.
To make the odds of fortune even,
Up bounced the cork of "seventy-seven,"
And sent me back to school; for then,
Ere yet I learn'd to wield the pen;
The pen that should all crimes assail,
The pen that leads to fame—or jail;
Then steam'd the malt, whose spirit bears
The frosts and suns of thirty years!

Through Ledbury, at decline of day,
The wheels that bore us, roll'd away,
To cross the Malvern Hills. 'Twas night;
Alternate met the weary sight
Each steep, dark, undulating brow,
And Worcester's gloomy vale below:
Gloomy no more, when eastward sprung
The light that gladdens heart and tongue;
When morn glanced o'er the shepherd's bed,
And cast her tints of lovely red

(1) Formerly the seat of Mr. Hopton, which exhibited, in a striking manner, the real old English magnificence and hospitality of the last age.

Wide o'er the vast expanding scene,
And mix'd her hues with mountain green;
Then, gazing from a height so fair,
Through miles of unpolluted air,
Where cultivation triumphs wide,
O'er boundless views on every side,
Thick planted towns, where toils ne'er cease,
And far-spread silent village peace,
As each succeeding pleasure came,
The heart acknowledged Malvern's fame.

Oft glancing thence to Cambria still,
Thou yet wert seen, my fav'rite hill,
Delightful Pen-y-Vale! Nor shall
Great Malvern's high imperious call
Wean me from thee, or turn aside
My earliest charm, my heart's strong pride.

Boast, Malvern, that thy springs revive
The drooping patient, scarce alive;
Where, as he gathers strength to toil,
Not e'en thy heights his spirit foil,
But nerve him on to bless, to' inhale,
And triumph in the morning gale;
Or noon's transcendent glories give
The vigorous touch that bids him live.
Perhaps e'en now he stops to breathe,
Surveying the expanse beneath;
Now climbs again, where keen winds blow,
And holds his beaver to his brow;
Waves to the Wrecken his white hand,
And, borrowing Fancy's magic wand,
Skims over Worcester's spires away,
Where sprung the blush of rising day;
And eyes, with joy, sweet Hagley Groves,
That Taste reveres and Virtue loves;
And stretch'd upon thy utmost ridge,
Marks Severn's course, and Upton-bridge,
That leads to home, to friends, or wife,
And all thy sweets, domestic life;
He drops the tear, his bosom glows,
That consecrated Avon flows
Down the blue distant vale, to yield
Its stores by Tewkesbury's deadly field,

And feels whatever can inspire,
From history's page or poet's fire.

Bright vale of Severn! shall the song
That wildly devious roves along,
The charms of nature to explore,
On history rest, or themes of yore?
More joy the thoughts of home supply,
Short be the glance at days gone by,
Though gallant Tewkesbury, clean and gay,
Hath much to tempt the traveller's stay,
Her noble abbey, with its dead,
A powerful claim; a silent dread,
Sacred as holy virtue springs
Where rests the dust of chiefs and kings;
With his who by foul murder died,
The fierce Lancastrian's hope and pride,
When brothers brothers could destroy,
Heroic Margaret's red-rose boy.[1]

Muse, turn thee from the field of blood,
Rest to the brave, peace to the good;
Avon, with all thy charms, adieu!
For Cheltenham mocks thy pilgrim crew;
And like a girl in beauty's power,
Flirts in the fairings of an hour.

Queen of the valley! soon behind
Gleam'd thy bright fanes, in sun and wind,
Fair Glo'ster—though thy fabric stands,
The boast of Severn's winding sands,
If grandeur, beauty, grace, can stay
The traveller on his homeward way.
There rests the Norman prince who rose
In zeal against the Christian's foes,
Yet doom'd at home to pine and die,
Of birthright robb'd, and liberty;
Foil'd was the lance he well could fling,
Robert,[2] who should have been a king;
His tide of wrongs he could not stem,
His brothers filch'd his diadem.

(1) Prince Edward, son of Henry the Sixth, taken prisoner with his mother, Margaret of Anjou, at the battle of Tewkesbury, and murdered by the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the Third.

(2) The eldest son of William the Conqueror was imprisoned eight-and-twenty years by his own brother!

There sleeps the king who aim'd to spurn
The daring Scots, at Bannockburn,
But turn'd him back, with humbled fame,
And Berkley's "shrieks" [1] declare his name.

Cease, cease the lay, the goal is won,
But silent memory revels on;
Fast closed the day, the last bright hour,
The setting sun, on Dursley tower,
Welcomed us home, and forward bade,
To Uley valley's peaceful shade.

Who so unfeeling, who so bold,
To judge that fictions, idly told,
Deform the verse that only tries
To consecrate realities?
If e'er the' unworthy thought should come,
Let strong conviction strike them dumb.
Go to the proof; your steed prepare,
Drink nature's cup, the rapture share;
If dull you find your devious course,
Your tour is useless—sell your horse.

Ye who, ingulf'd in trade, endure
What gold alone can never cure;
The constant sigh for scenes of peace,
From the world's trammels free release,
Wait not, for reason's sake attend,
Wait not in chains till times shall mend;
Till the clear voice, grown hoarse and gruff,
Cries, "Now I'll go, I'm rich enough;"
Youth, and the prime of manhood, seize,
Steal ten days' absence, ten days' ease;
Bid ledgers from your minds depart;
Let mem'ry's treasures cheer the heart;
And when your children round you grow,
With opening charms and manly brow,
Talk of the Wye as some old dream,
Call it the wild, the wizard stream;
Sink in your broad arm-chair to rest,
And youth shall smile to see you bless'd.

Artists, betimes your powers employ,
And take the pilgrimage of joy;

(1) "Shrieks of an agonizing king."

The eye of genius may behold
A thousand beauties here untold;
Rock, that defies the winter's storm;
Wood, in its most imposing form,
That climbs the mountain, bows below,
Where deep the' unsullied waters flow.
Here Gilpin's eye transported scann'd
Views by no tricks of Fancy plann'd;
Gray here, upon the stream reclined,
Stored with delight his ardent mind.
But let the vacant trifler stray
From thy enchantments far away;
For should, from Fashion's rainbow train,
The idle and the vicious vain,
In sacrilege presume to move
Through these dear scenes of peace and love,
The spirit of the stream would rise
In wrathful mood, and tenfold size,
And nobly guard his Coldwell Spring,
And bid his inmost caverns ring;
Loud thund'ring on the giddy crew,
"My stream was never meant for you."
But ye, to nobler feelings born,
Who sense and nature dare not scorn,
Glide gaily on, and ye shall find
The blest serenity of mind
That springs from silence; or shall raise
The hand, the eye, the voice of praise.
Live then, sweet stream! and henceforth be
The darling of Posterity;
Loved for thyself, for ever dear,
Like Beauty's smile and Virtue's tear,
Till Time his striding race give o'er,
And verse itself shall charm no more.

RURAL TALES.

PREFACE.

THE Poems here offered to the public were chiefly written during the interval between the concluding and the publishing of the "Farmer's Boy," an interval of nearly two years. The pieces of a later date are, "The Widow to her Hour-glass," "The Fakenham Ghost," "Walter and Jane," &c. At the time of publishing the "Farmer's Boy," circumstances occurred which rendered it necessary to submit these poems to the perusal of my friends; under whose approbation I now give them, with some confidence as to their moral merit, to the judgment of the public. And as they treat of village manners, and rural scenes, it appears to me not ill-timed to avow, that I have hopes of meeting in some degree the approbation of my country. I was not prepared for the decided, and I may surely say extraordinary, attention which the public has shown towards the "Farmer's Boy:" the consequence has been such as my true friends will rejoice to hear; it has produced me many essential blessings. And I feel peculiarly gratified in finding that a poor man in England may assert the dignity of Virtue, and speak of the imperishable beauties of Nature, and be heard,—and heard, perhaps, with greater attention for his being poor.

Whoever thinks of me, or my concerns, must necessarily indulge the pleasing idea of gratitude, and join a thought of my first great friend Mr. Lofft. And on this head, I believe every reader, who has himself any feeling, will judge rightly of mine: if otherwise, I would much rather he would lay down this volume, and grasp hold of such fleeting pleasures as the world's business may afford him. I speak not of that gentleman as a public character, or as a scholar. Of the former I know but little, and of the

latter nothing. But I know from experience, and I glory in this fair opportunity of saying it, that his private life is a lesson of morality; his manners gentle, his heart sincere: and I regard it as one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life, that my introduction to public notice fell to so zealous and unwearied a friend.[1]

I have received many honourable testimonies of esteem from strangers; letters without a name, but filled with the most cordial advice, and almost a parental anxiety, for my safety under so great a share of public applause. I beg to refer such friends to the great teacher, Time; and hope that he will hereafter give me my deserts, and no more.

One piece in this collection will inform the reader of my most pleasing visit to Wakefield Lodge: books, solitude, and objects entirely new, brought pleasures which memory will always cherish. That noble and worthy family, and all my immediate and unknown friends, will, I hope, believe the sincerity of my thanks for all their numerous favours, and candidly judge the poems before them.

R. BLOOMFIELD.

SEPT. 29, 1801.

(1) I dare not take to myself a praise like this; and yet I was, perhaps, hardly at liberty to disclaim what should be mine, and the endeavour of every one to deserve. This I can say, that I have reason to rejoice that Mr. George Bloomfield introduced the "Farmer's Boy" to me.—CAPEL LOFFT.

RICHARD AND KATE;

OR,

FAIR-DAY.

A SUFFOLK BALLAD.

I.

"COME, Goody, stop your humdrum wheel,
Sweep up your orts, and get your hat;
Old joys revived once more I feel,
'Tis Fair-day;—aye, and more than that.

II.

"Have you forgot, Kate, prithee say,
How many seasons here we 've tarried?
'Tis forty years, this very day,
Since you and I, old girl, were married!

III.

"Look out; the sun shines warm and bright,
The stiles are low, the paths all dry;
I know you cut your corns last night:
Come: be as free from care as I.

IV.

"For I 'm resolved once more to see
That place where we so often met;
Though few have had more cares than we,
We 've none just now to make us fret."

V.

Kate scorn'd to damp the generous flame
That warm'd her aged partner's breast:
Yet, ere determination came,
She thus some trifling doubts express'd:

VI.

"Night will come on; when seated snug,
And you 've perhaps begun some tale,
Can you then leave your dear stone mug;
Leave all the folks, and all the ale?"

VII.

"Aye, Kate, I wool;—because I know,
Though time has been we both could run,
Such days are gone and over now;—
I only mean to see the fun."

VIII.

She straight slipp'd off the wall and band,[1]
And laid aside her lucks and twitches;[1]
And to the hutch[2] she reach'd her hand,
And gave him out his Sunday breeches.

IX.

His mattock he behind the door
And hedging-gloves again replaced;
And look'd across the yellow moor,
And urged his tott'ring spouse to haste.

X.

The day was up, the air serene,
The firmament without a cloud;
The bee humm'd o'er the level green,
Where knots of trembling cowslips bow'd.

XI.

And Richard thus, with heart elate,
As past things rush'd across his mind,
Over his shoulder talk'd to Kate,
Who, snug tuckt up, walk'd slow behind.

XII.

"When once a giggling mawther[3] you,
And I a red-faced chubby boy,
Sly tricks you play'd me not a few;
For mischief was your greatest joy.

(1) Terms used in spinning. (2) *Hutch*, a chest.
(3) *Mawther*, girl, in the East Anglian dialect.

XIII.

"Once, passing by this very tree,
A gotch[1] of milk I'd been to fill,
You shoulder'd me; then laugh'd to see
Me and my gotch spin down the hill."

XIV.

"'Tis true," she said; "but here behold,
And marvel at the course of Time;
Though you and I are both grown old,
This tree is only in its prime!"

XV.

"Well, Goody, don't stand preaching now;
Folks don't preach sermons at a fair:
We've rear'd ten boys and girls, you know;
And I'll be bound they'll all be there."

XVI.

Now friendly nods and smiles had they,
From many a kind fair-going face:
And many a pinch Kate gave away,
While Richard kept his usual pace.

XVII.

At length arrived amidst the throng,
Grand-children bawling hemm'd them round;
And dragg'd them by the skirts along
Where gingerbread bestrew'd the ground.

XVIII.

And soon the aged couple spied
Their lusty sons, and daughters dear:—
When Richard thus exulting cried,
"Didn't I tell you they'd be here?"

XIX.

The cordial greetings of the soul
Were visible in every face;
Affection, void of all control,
Govern'd with a resistless grace.

(2) A pitcher, East Anglian.

XX.

'Twas good to see the honest strife,
Which should contribute most to please;
And hear the long-recounted life,
Of infant tricks, and happy days.

XXI.

But now, as at some nobler places,
Amongst the leaders 'twas decreed
Time to begin the Dicky Races;
More famed for laughter than for speed.

XXII.

Richard look'd on with wondrous glee,
And praised the lad who chanced to win;
"Kate, wa'n't I such a one as he?
As like him, ay, as pin to pin.

XXIII.

"Full fifty years are pass'd away
Since I rode this same ground about;
Lord! I was lively as the day!
I won the high-lows out and out!

XXIV.

"I'm surely growing young again,
I feel myself so kedge and plump:
From head to foot I've not one pain;
Nay, hang me if I cou'dn't jump."

XXV.

Thus spoke the ale in Richard's pate,
A very little made him mellow;
But still he loved his faithful Kate,
Who whisper'd thus: "My good old fellow,

XXVI.

"Remember what you promised me:
And see, the sun is getting low;
The children want an hour, ye see,
To talk a bit before we go."

XXVII.

Like youthful lover most complying
He turn'd, and chuck'd her by the chin:
Then all across the green grass hieing,
Right merry faces, all akin;

XXVIII.

Their farewell quart, beneath a tree
That droop'd its branches from above;
Awaked the pure felicity
That waits upon parental love.

XXIX.

Kate view'd her blooming daughters round,
And sons, who shook her wither'd hand:
Her features spoke what joy she found;
But utterance had made a stand.

XXX.

The children toppled on the green,
And bowl'd their fairings down the hill;
Richard with pride beheld the scene,
Nor could he for his life sit still.

XXXI.

A Father's uncheck'd feelings gave
A tenderness to all he said;
"My boys, how proud am I to have
My name thus round the country spread!

XXXII.

"Through all my days I 've labour'd hard,
And could of pains and crosses tell;
But this is labour's great reward,
To meet ye thus, and see ye well.

XXXIII.

"My good old Partner, when at home,
Sometimes with wishes mingles tears;
Goody, says I, let what wool come,
We 've nothing for them but our pray'rs.

XXXIV.

"May you be all as old as I,
And see your sons to manhood grow;
And, many a time before you die,
Be just as pleased as I am now."

XXXV.

Then, (raising still his mug and voice,)
"An old man's weakness don't despise!
I love you well, my girls and boys;
God bless you all;"—so said his eyes—

XXXVI.

For as he spoke a big round drop
Fell, bounding on his ample sleeve;
A witness which he could not stop,
A witness which all hearts believe.

XXXVII.

Thou, Filial Piety, wert there;
And round the ring, benignly bright,
Dwelt in the luscious half-shed tear,
And in the parting word—Good Night.

XXXVIII.

With thankful hearts and strengthen'd love,
The poor old Pair, supremely blest,
Saw the sun sink behind the grove,
And gain'd once more their lowly rest.

WALTER AND JANE;

OR,

THE POOR BLACKSMITH.

A COUNTRY TALE.

BRIGHT was the summer sky, the mornings gay,
And Jane was young and cheerful as the day.
Not yet to Love, but Mirth, she paid her vows;
And Echo mock'd her as she call'd her cows.
Tufts of green broom, that full in blossom vied,
And graced with spotted gold the upland side,
The level fogs o'erlook'd; too high to share;
As lovely Jane o'erlook'd the clouds of Care;
No meadow-flow'r rose fresher to the view,
That met her morning footsteps in the dew;
Where, if a nodding stranger eyed her charms,
The blush of innocence was up in arms,
Love's random glances struck the' unguarded mind,
And Beauty's magic made him look behind.

Duly as morning blush'd or twilight came,
Secure of greeting smiles and village fame,
She pass'd the straw-roof'd shed, in ranges where
Hung many a well-turn'd shoe and glitt'ring share;
Where Walter, as the charmer tripp'd along,
Would stop his roaring bellows and his song.

Dawn of affection; Love's delicious sigh!
Caught from the lightnings of a speaking eye,
That leads the heart to rapture or to woe,
'Twas Walter's fate thy madd'ning power to know,
And scarce to know, ere in its infant twine,
As the blast shakes the tendrils of the vine,
The budding bliss that full of promise grew,
The chilling blight of separation knew.

Scarce had he told his heart's unquiet case,
And Jane to shun him ceased to mend her pace,
And learnt to listen trembling as he spoke,
And fondly judge his words beyond a joke;
When, at the goal that bounds our prospects here,
Jane's widow'd mistress ended her career:
Blessings attended her divided store,
The mansion sold, (Jane's peaceful home no more,)
A distant village own'd her for its queen,
Another service, and another scene.
But could another scene so pleasing prove,
Twelve weary miles from Walter and from Love?
The maid grew thoughtful; yet to Fate resign'd,
Knew not the worth of what she'd left behind.

He when at eve released from toil and heat,
Soon miss'd the smiles that taught his heart to beat;
Each sabbath-day of late was wont to prove
Hope's liberal feast, the holiday of Love:
But now, upon his spirit's ebbing strength
Came each dull hour's intolerable length.
The next had scarcely dawn'd when Walter hied
O er hill and dale, Affection for his guide:
O'er the brown heath his pathless journey lay,
Where screaming lapwings hail'd the op'ning day.
High rose the sun, the anxious lover sigh'd;
His slipp'ry soles bespoke the dew was dried;
Her last farewell hung fondly on his tongue
As o'er the tufted furze elate he sprung;
Trifling impediments; his heart was light,
For Love and Beauty glow'd in Fancy's sight;
And soon he gazed on Jane's enchanting face,
Renew'd his passion,—but destroy'd his peace.
Truth, at whose shrine he bow'd, inflicted pain;
And Conscience whisper'd, "Never come again."
For now, his tide of gladness to oppose,
A clay-cold damp of doubts and fears arose;
Clouds, which involve, midst Love and Reason's strife,
The poor man's prospect when he takes a wife.
Though gay his journeys in the summer's prime,
Each seem'd the repetition of a crime;
He never left her but with many a sigh,
When tears stole down his face, she knew not why.
Severe his task those visits to forego,
And feed his heart with voluntary woe,

Yet this he did; the wan moon circling found
His evenings cheerless, and his rest unsound;
And saw the' unquench'd flame his bosom swell:
What were his doubts, thus let the story tell.

A month's sharp conflict only served to prove
The power, as well as truth, of Walter's love.
Absence more strongly on his mind portray'd
His own sweet, injured, unoffending maid.
Once more he'd go; full resolute awhile,
But heard his native bells on every stile;
The sound recall'd him with a powerful charm,
The heath wide open'd, and the day was warm;
There, where a bed of tempting green is found,
Increasing anguish weigh'd him to the ground,
His well-grown limbs the scatter'd daisies press'd,
While his clench'd hand fell heavy on his breast.

"Why do I go in cruel sport to say,
'I love thee, Jane, appoint the happy day?'
Why seek her sweet ingenuous reply,
Then grasp her hand and proffer—poverty?
Why, if I love her and adore her name,
Why act like time and sickness on her frame?
Why should my scanty pittance nip her prime,
And chase away the rose before its time?
I'm young, 'tis true; the world beholds me free;
Labour ne'er show'd a frightful face to me;
Nature's first wants hard labour should supply;
But should it fail, 'twill be too late to fly.
Some summers hence, if nought our loves annoy,
The image of my Jane may lisp her joy;
Or, blooming boys with imitative swing
May mock my arm, and make the anvil ring;
Then if in rags—But, oh, my heart, forbear,—
I love the girl, and why should I despair?
And that I love her all the village knows;
Oft from my pain the mirth of others flows:
As when a neighbour's steed with glancing eye
Saw his pared hoof supported on my thigh;
Jane pass'd that instant; mischief came of course:
I drove the nail awry and lamed the horse;
The poor beast limp'd: I bore a master's frown;
A thousand times I wish'd the wound my own.
When to these tangling thoughts I've been resign'd,
Fury or languor has possess'd my mind,

All eyes have stared I 've blown a blast so strong ;
Forgot to smite at all, or smote too long.
If at the ale-house door, with careless glee
One drinks to Jane, and darts a look on me ;
I feel that blush which her dear name will bring,
I feel :—but, guilty Love, 'tis not thy sting !
Yet what are jeers ? the bubbles of an hour ;
Jane knows what Love can do, and feels its power
In her mild eye fair Truth her meaning tells ;
'Tis not in looks like hers that falsehood dwells.
As water shed upon a dusty way
I've seen midst downward pebbles devious stray ;
If kindred drops an adverse channel keep,
The crystal friends toward each other creep ;
Near, and still nearer, rolls each little tide,
The' expanding mirror swells on either side :
They touch—'tis done—receding bound'ries fly,
An instantaneous union strikes the eye ;
So 'tis with us : for Jane would be my bride ;
Shall coward fears then turn the bliss aside ? "

While thus he spoke he heard a gentle sound,
That seem'd a jarring footstep on the ground :
Ashamed of grief, he bade his eyes unclose,
And shook with agitation as he rose ;
All unprepared the sweet surprise to bear,
His heart beat high, for Jane herself was there.—

Flush'd was her cheek ; she seem'd the full-blown flower,
For warmth gave loveliness a double power ;
Round her fair brow the deep confusion ran,
A waving handkerchief became her fan ;
Her lips, where dwelt sweet love and smiling ease,
Puff'd gently back the warm assailing breeze.
" I've travell'd all these weary miles with pain,
To see my native village once again :
And show my true regard for neighbour Hind ;
Not like you, Walter, she was always kind."
'Twas thus, each soft sensation laid aside,
She buoy'd her spirits up with maiden pride ;
Disclaim'd her love, e'en while she felt the sting ;
" What, come for Walter's sake ! " 'twas no such thing.
But when astonishment his tongue released,
Pride's usurpation in an instant ceased :

By force he caught her hand as passing by,
And gazed upon her half-averted eye;
His heart's distraction, and his boding fears
She heard, and answer'd with a flood of tears;
Precious relief! sure friends that forward press
To tell the mind's unspeakable distress.
Ye youths, whom crimson'd health and genuine fire
Bear joyous on the wings of young desire,
Ye, who still bow to Love's almighty sway,
What could true passion, what could Walter say?
Age, tell me true, nor shake your locks in vain,
Tread back your paths, and be in love again;
In your young days did such a favouring hour
Show you the littleness of wealth and power,
Advent'rous climbers of the mountain's brow,
While Love, their master, spreads his couch below.
"My dearest Jane," the untaught Walter cried,
As, half repell'd, he pleaded by her side;
"My dearest Jane, think of me as you may—"
Thus—still unutter'd what he strove to say,
They breathed in sighs the anguish of their minds,
And took the path that led to neighbour Hind's.

A secret joy the well-known roof inspired,
Small was its store, and little they desired;
Jane dried her tears; while Walter forward flew,
To aid the dame; who to the brink updrew
The pond'rous bucket as they reach'd the well,
And scarcely with exhausted breath could tell
How welcome to her cot the blooming pair,
O'er whom she watch'd with a maternal care.
"What ails thee, Jane?" the wary matron cried;
With heaving breast the modest maid replied,
Now gently moving back her wooden chair
To shun the current of the cooling air;
"Not much, good dame; I'm weary by the way;
Perhaps, anon, I've something else to say."
Now, while the seed-cake crumbled on her knee,
And snowy jessamine peep'd in to see;
And the transparent lilac at the door,
Full to the sun its purple honours bore,
The clam'rous hen her fearless brood display'd,
And march'd around; while thus the matron said:
"Jane has been weeping, Walter;—prithee why?
I've seen her laugh, and dance, but never cry.

But I can guess; with her you should have been,
When late I saw you loit'ring on the green;
I'm an old woman, and the truth may tell;
I say then, boy, you have not used her well."
Jane felt for Walter; shared his cruel pain,
And pity urged her e'en to tears again.
"Don't scold him, neighbour, he has much to say;
Indeed he came and met me by the way."
The dame resumed—"Why then, my children, why
Do such young bosoms heave the piteous sigh?
The ills of life to you are yet unknown;
Death's sev'ring shaft, and Poverty's cold frown:
I've felt them both by turns;—but as they pass'd,
Strong was my trust, and here I am at last.
When I dwelt young and cheerful down the lane,
(And, though I say it, I was much like Jane)
O'er flow'ry fields with Hind, I loved to stray,
And talk, and laugh, and fool the time away:
And Care defied; who not one pain could give,
Till the thought came of how we were to live;
And then Love plied his arrows thicker still:
And proved victorious;—as he always will.
We braved life's storm together; while that drone,
Your poor old uncle, Walter, lived alone.
He died the other day: when round his bed
No tender soothing tear Affection shed—
Affection! 'twas a plant he never knew;—
Why should he feast on fruits he never grew?"

Walter caught fire: nor was he charm'd alone
With conscious Truth's firm elevated tone;
Jane from her seat sprang forward, half afraid,
Attesting with a blush what goody said.
Her lover took a more decided part:—
(Oh! 'twas the very chord that touch'd his heart)—
Alive to the best feelings man can prize,
A bridegroom's transport sparkled in his eyes;
Love, conquering power, with unrestricted range
Silenced the arguments of Time and Change;
And led his vot'ry on, and bade him view,
And prize the light-wing'd moments as they flew:
All doubts gave way, all retrospective lore,
Whence cooler Reason tortured him before;
Comparison of times, the lab'rer's hire,
And many truths Reflection might inspire,

Sunk powerless. "Dame, I am a fool," he cried;
"Alone I might have reason'd till I died.
I caused those tears of Jane's—but as they fell
How much I felt none but ourselves can tell.
While dastard fears withheld me from her sight,
Sighs reign'd by day and hideous dreams by night;
'Twas then the soldier's plume and rolling drum
Seem'd for a while to strike my sorrows dumb;
To fly from Care then half-resolved I stood,
And without horror mused on fields of blood;
But Hope prevail'd—be then the sword resign'd;
And I'll make shares for those that stay behind.
And you, sweet Girl,"——
He would have added more,
Had not a glancing shadow at the door
Announced a guest, who bore with winning grace
His well-timed errand pictured in his face.
Around with silent reverence they stood;
A blameless reverence—the man was good.
Wealth he had some, a match for his desires,
First on the list of active country 'squires.
Seeing the youthful pair with downcast eyes,
Unmoved by summer flowers and cloudless skies,
Pass slowly by his gate; his book resign'd,
He watch'd their steps, and follow'd far behind,
Bearing with inward joy, and honest pride,
A trust of Walter's kinsman ere he died,
A hard-earn'd mite, deposited with care,
And with a miser's spirit worshipp'd there.

He found what oft the generous bosom seeks,
In the dame's court'sies and Jane's blushing cheeks,
That consciousness of worth, that freeborn grace,
Which waits on virtue in the meanest place.
"Young man, I'll not apologize to you,
Nor name intrusion, for my news is true;
'Tis duty brings me here: your wants I've heard,
And can relieve: yet be the dead revered.
Here, in this purse, (what should have cheer'd a wife,)
Lies half the savings of your uncle's life!
I know your history, and your wishes know;
And love to see the seeds of virtue grow.
I've a spare shed that fronts the public road,
Make that your shop; I'll make it your abode.

Thus much from me,—the rest is but your due."
That instant twenty pieces sprung to view.
Goody (her dim eyes wiping) raised her brow,
And saw the young pair look they knew not how:
Perils and power while humble minds forego,
Who gives them half a kingdom gives them woe;
Comforts may be procured and Want defied,
Heavens! with how small a sum, when right applied!
Give Love and honest Industry their way,
Clear but the sunrise of life's little day,
Those we term poor shall oft that wealth obtain,
For which the' ambitious sigh, but sigh in vain:
Wealth that still brightens, as its stores increase;
The calm of conscience, and the reign of peace.

Walter's enamour'd soul, from news like this,
Now felt the dawnings of his future bliss.
E'en as the redbreast shelt'ring in a bower,
Mourns the short darkness of a passing shower,
Then, while the azure sky extends around,
Darts on a worm that breaks the moisten'd ground,
And mounts the dripping fence with joy elate,
And shares the prize triumphant with his mate:
So did the youth;—the treasure straight became
An humble servant to Love's sacred flame;
Glorious subjection!—Thus his silence broke:
Joy gave him words; still quick'ning as he spoke.

"Want was my dread, my wishes were but few;
Others might doubt, but Jane those wishes knew:
This gold may rid my heart of pains and sighs;
But her true love is still my greatest prize.
Long as I live, when this bright day comes round,
Beneath my roof your noble deeds shall sound;
But, first, to make my gratitude appear,
I 'll shoe your honour's horses for a year;
If clouds should threaten when your corn is down,
I 'll lend a hand, and summon half the town;
If good betide, I'll sound it in my songs,
And be the first avenger of your wrongs:
Though rude in manners, free I hope to live:
This ale's not mine, no ale have I to give;
Yet, Sir, though fortune frown'd when I was born,
Let's drink eternal friendship from this horn.

How much our present joy to thee we owe,
Soon our three bells shall let the neighbours know:
The sound shall raise e'en stooping Age awhile,
And every maid shall meet you with a smile:
Long may you live"—the wish like lightning flew:
By each repeated as the squire withdrew.
"Long may you live," his feeling heart rejoin'd;
Leaving well-pleased such happy souls behind.
Hope promised fair to cheer them to the end;
With Love their guide, and Goody for their friend.

THE WIDOW TO HER HOUR-GLASS.

I.

COME, friend, I'll turn thee up again:
Companion of the lonely hour!
Spring thirty times hath fed with rain
And clothed with leaves my humble bower,
Since thou hast stood
In frame of wood,
On chest or window by my side;
At every Birth still thou wert near,
Still spoke thine admonitions clear.—
And, when my Husband died.

II.

I 've often watch'd thy streaming sand,
And seen the growing mountain rise,
And often found life's hopes to stand
On props as weak in wisdom's eyes:
Its conic crown
Still sliding down,
Again heap'd up, then down again;
The sand above more hollow grew,
Like days and years still filt'ring through,
And mingling joy and pain.

III.

While thus I spin, and sometimes sing,
(For now and then my heart will glow,)
Thou measurest Time's expanding wing:
By thee the noontide hour I know:
Though silent thou,
Still shalt thou flow,
And jog along thy destined way;
But when I glean the sultry fields,
When earth her yellow harvest yields,
Thou get'st a holiday.

IV.

Steady as Truth, on either end
Thy daily task performing well,
Thou 'rt Meditation's constant friend,
And strik'st the heart without a bell:
Come, lovely May!
Thy lengthen'd day
Shall gild once more my native plain;
Curl inward here, sweet woodbine flower: —
Companion of the lonely hour!
I'll turn thee up again.

ON HEARING OF THE TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE FARMER'S BOY INTO LATIN.

Hey, Giles! in what new garb art dress'd?
For lads like you methinks a bold one;
I 'm glad to see thee so caress'd;
But, hark ye!—don't despise your old one.
Thou 'rt not the first by many a boy
Who 've found abroad good friends to own 'em;
Then, in such coats have shown their joy,
E'en their own fathers have not known 'em.

THE MILLER'S MAID.

A TALE.

NEAR the high road, upon a winding stream,
An honest miller rose to wealth and fame:
The noblest virtues cheer'd his lengthen'd days,
And all the country echoed with his praise:
His wife, the doctress of the neighb'ring poor,
Drew constant prayers and blessings round his door.

One summer's night (the hour of rest was come)
Darkness unusual overspread their home;
A chilling blast was felt; the foremost cloud
Sprinkled the bubbling pool; and thunder loud,
Though distant yet, menaced the country round,
And fill'd the heavens with its solemn sound.
Who can retire to rest when tempests lour?
Nor wait the issue of the coming hour?
Meekly resign'd she sat, in anxious pain;
He fill'd his pipe, and listen'd to the rain
That batter'd furiously their strong abode,
Roar'd in the dam, and lash'd the pebbled road:
When, mingled with the storm, confused and wild,
They heard, or thought they heard, a screaming child.
The voice approach'd; and midst the thunder's roar,
Now loudly begg'd for mercy at the door.

Mercy was there: the miller heard the call;
His door he open'd; when a sudden squall
Drove in a wretched girl; who weeping stood,
Whilst the cold rain dripp'd from her in a flood.
With kind officiousness the tender dame
Roused up the dying embers to a flame;
Dry clothes procured, and cheer'd her shiv'ring guest,
And soothed the sorrows of her infant breast.
But as she stript her shoulders, lily-white,
What marks of cruel usage shock'd their sight!

Weals, and blue wounds, most piteous to behold
Upon a child yet scarcely ten years old.

The miller felt his indignation rise,
Yet, as the weary stranger closed her eyes,
And seem'd fatigued beyond her strength and years,
"Sleep, child," he said, "and wipe away your tears."
They watch'd her slumbers till the storm was done;
When thus the generous man again begun:
"See, flutt'ring sighs that rise against her will,
And agitating dreams disturb her still!
Dame, we should know before we go to rest,
Whence comes this girl, and how she came distress'd.
Wake her and ask; for she is sorely bruised:
I long to know by whom she's thus misused—
Child, what's your name? how came you in the storm?
Have you no home to keep you dry and warm?
Who gave you all those wounds your shoulders show?
Where are your parents? Whither would you go?"

The stranger bursting into tears, look'd pale,
And this the purport of her artless tale:
"I have no parents: and no friends beside;
I well remember when my mother died:
My brother cried; and so did I that day:
We had no father;—he was gone away:
That night we left our homes new clothes to wear;
The Workhouse found them; we were carried there.
We loved each other dearly: when we met
We always shared what trifles we could get.
But George was older by a year than me:—
He parted from me and was sent to sea.
'Good-bye, dear Phœbe,' the poor fellow said!
Perhaps he 'll come again; perhaps he 's dead.
When I grew strong enough I went to place;
My mistress had a sour ill-natured face;
And though I 've been so often beat and chid,
I strove to please her, Sir, indeed I did.
Weary and spiritless to bed I crept,
And always cried at night before I slept.
This morning I offended; and I bore
A cruel beating, worse than all before.
Unknown to all the house I ran away;
And thus far travell'd through the sultry day;

And, O, don't send me back! I dare not go—"
"I send you back!" the miller cried, "No, no."
The' appeals of wretchedness had weight with him,
And sympathy would warm him every limb;
He mutter'd, glorying in the work begun,
"Well done, my little wench; 'twas nobly done!"
Then said, with looks more cheering than the fire,
And feelings such as pity can inspire,
"My house has childless been this many a year;
While you deserve it you shall tarry here."
The orphan mark'd the ardour of his eye,
Blest his kind words, and thank'd him with a sigh.

Thus was the sacred compact doubly seal'd;
Thus were her spirits raised, her bruises heal'd:
Thankful, and cheerful too, no more afraid,
Thus little Phœbe was the Miller's maid.
Grateful they found her; patient of control:
A most bewitching gentleness of soul
Made pleasure of what work she had to do:
She grew in stature, and in beauty too.

Five years she pass'd in this delightful home:
Five happy years: but, when the sixth was come,
The miller from a market town hard by,
Brought home a sturdy youth, his strength to try,
To raise the sluice-gates early every morn,
To heave his powder'd sacks and grind his corn:
And meeting Phœbe, whom he loved so dear,
"I've brought you home a husband, girl; d'ye hear?
He begg'd for work, his money seem'd but scant:
Those that will work 'tis pity they should want.
So use him well, and we shall shortly see
Whether he merits what I've done, like thee."

Now throbb'd her heart,—a new sensation quite,—
Whene'er the comely stranger was in sight:
For he at once assiduously strove
To please so sweet a maid, and win her love.
At every corner stopp'd her in her way;
And saw fresh beauties opening ev'ry day.
He took delight in tracing in her face
The mantling blush, and ev'ry nameless grace,
That sensibility would bring to view,
When love he mentioned;—love and honour true.

But Phœbe still was shy; and wish'd to know
More of the honest youth, whose manly brow
She verily believed was Truth's own throne,
And all his words as artless as her own.
Most true she judged; yet, long the youth forbore
Divulging where, and how, he lived before;
And seem'd to strive his history to hide,
Till fair esteem enlisted on his side.
The miller saw, and mention'd, in his praise,
The prompt fidelity of all his ways:
Till in a vacant hour, the dinner done,
One day he joking cried, "Come here, my son!
'Tis pity that so good a lad as you
Beneath my roof should bring disorders new;
But here's my Phœbe,—once so light and airy
She 'd trip along the passage like a fairy,—
Has lost her swiftness quite, since here you came;
And yet—I can't perceive the girl is lame!
The obstacles she meets with still fall thicker:
Old as I am I 'd turn a corner quicker."
The youth blush'd deep; and Phœbe hung her head:
The good man smiled, and thus again he said:
"Not that I deem it matter of surprise,
That you should love to gaze at Phœbe's eyes;
But be explicit, boy, and deal with honour:
I feel my happiness depend upon her.
When here you came, you 'd sorrow on your brow;
And I 've forborne to question you till now,—
First, then, say what thou art." He instant bow'd,
And thus, in Phœbe's hearing, spoke aloud:
"Thus far experienced, sir, in you I find
All that is generous, fatherly, and kind;
And while you look for proofs of real worth,
You 'll not regard the meanness of my birth.
When, pennyless and sad, you met with me,
I 'd just escaped the dangers of the sea;
Resolved to try my fortune on the shore:
To get my bread; and trust the waves no more:
Having no home, nor parents, left behind,
I 'd all my fortune, all my friends to find.
Keen disappointment wounded me that morn:
For, trav'lling near the spot where I was born,
I at the well-known door where I was bred,
Inquired who still was living, who was dead:

But first, and most, I sought with anxious fear
Tidings to gain of her who once was dear;
A girl, with all the meekness of the dove,
The constant sharer of my childhood's love;
She call'd me brother;—which I heard with pride,
Though now suspect we are not so allied.
Thus much I learnt; (no more the churls would say;)
She went to service, and she ran away;
And scandal added"—"Hold!" the miller cried,
And, in an instant, stood at Phœbe's side;
For he observed, while list'ning to the tale,
Her spirits falter'd, and her cheeks turn'd pale;
Whilst her clasp'd hands descended to her knee,
She sinking whisper'd forth, "O God, 'tis he!"
The good man, though he guess'd the pleasing truth,
Was far too busy to inform the youth;
But stirr'd himself amain to aid his wife,
Who soon restored the trembler back to life.
Awhile insensible she still appear'd;
But "O my brother!" was distinctly heard:
The' astonish'd youth now held her to his breast;
And tears and kisses soon explain'd the rest.

Past deeds now from each tongue alternate fell:
For news of dearest import both could tell.
Fondly, from childhood's tears to youth's full prime,
They match'd the incidents of jogging time;
And proved that when, with tyranny opprest,
Poor Phœbe groan'd with wounds and broken rest,
George felt no less; was harass'd and forlorn;
A rope's end follow'd him both night and morn.
And in that very storm when Phœbe fled,
When the rain drench'd her yet unshelter'd head;
That very storm he on the ocean braved,
The vessel founder'd, and the boy was saved!
Mysterious Heaven!—and O, with what delight
She told the happy issue of her flight:
To his charm'd heart a living picture drew;
And gave to hospitality its due!
The list'ning host observed the gentle pair;
And ponder'd on the means that brought them there:
Convinced, while unimpeach'd their virtue stood,
'Twas Heaven's high will that he should do them good.

But now the anxious dame, impatient grown,
Demanded what the youth had heard or known,

Whereon to ground those doubts but just exprest;—
Doubts, which must interest the feeling breast:
"Her brother, wert thou, George?—how? prithee, say:
Canst thou forego, or cast that name away?"

"No living proofs have I," the youth replied,
That we by closest ties are not allied;
But in my memory live, and ever will,
A mother's dying words—I hear them still:
She said, to one who watch'd her parting breath,
'Don't separate the children at my death;
They're not both mine: but'—here the scene was closed;
She died, and left us helpless and exposed;
Nor Time hath thrown, nor Reason's opening power,
One friendly ray on that benighted hour."

Ne'er did the chieftains of a warring state
Hear from the oracle their half-told fate
With more religious fear, or more suspense,
Than Phœbe now endured: for every sense
Became absorb'd in this unwelcome theme;
Nay, every meditation, every dream,
The' inexplicable sentence held to view;
"They're not both mine," was every morning new:
For, till this hour, the maid had never proved
How far she was enthrall'd, how much she loved:
In that fond character he first appear'd;
His kindness charm'd her, and his smiles endear'd:
This dubious mystery the passion cross'd;
Her peace was wounded, and her lover lost.
For George with all his resolution strove
To check the progress of his growing love;
Or, if he e'er indulged a tender kiss,
The' unravell'd secret robb'd him of his bliss.
Health's foe, suspense, so irksome to be borne,
An ever-piercing and retreating thorn,
Hung on their hearts, when nature bade them rise,
And stole content's bright ensign from their eyes.

The good folks saw the change, and grieved to find
These troubles labouring in Phœbe's mind.
They loved them both; and with one voice proposed
The only means whence truth might be disclosed;
That, when the summer months should shrink the rill,
And scarce its languid stream would turn the mill,

When the spring broods, and pigs, and lambs were rear'd,
(A time when George and Phœbe might be spared),
Their birthplace they should visit once again,
To try with joint endeavours to obtain
From record, or tradition, what might be
To chain, or set their chain'd affections free:
Affinity beyond all doubts to prove;
Or clear the road for Nature and for Love.

Never, till now, did Phœbe count the hours,
Or think May long, or wish away its flowers.
With mutual sighs both fann'd the wings of Time;
As we climb hills, and gladden as we climb,
And reach at last the distant promised seat,
Casting the glowing landscape at our feet.
Oft had the morning rose with dew been wet,
And oft the journeying sun in glory set,
Beyond the willow'd meads of vigorous grass,
The steep green hill, and woods they were to pass;
When now the day arrived: impatience reign'd;
And George,—by trifling obstacles detain'd,—
His bending blackthorn on the threshold prest,
Survey'd the windward clouds, and hoped the best
Phœbe, attired with every modest grace,
While health and beauty revell'd in her face,
Came forth; but soon evinced an absent mind,
For back she turn'd for something left behind;
Again the same, till George grew tired of home,
And peevishly exclaim'd, "Come, Phœbe, come."
Another hindrance yet he had to feel:
As from the door they tripp'd with nimble heel,
A poor old man, foot-founder'd and alone,
Thus urgent spoke, in trouble's genuine tone:
"My pretty maid, if happiness you seek,
May disappointment never fade your cheek!—
Yours be the joy;—yet, feel another's woe:
O leave some little gift before you go."
His words struck home; and back she turn'd again,
(The ready friend of indigence and pain,)
To banish hunger from his shatter'd frame;
And close behind her, lo, the miller came,
With jug in hand, and cried, "George, why such haste?
Here; take a draught; and let that soldier taste."
"Thanks for your bounty, Sir," the veteran said:
Threw down his wallet, and made bare his head;

And straight began, though mix'd with doubts and fears,
The' unprefaced history of his latter years.
"I cross'd the' Atlantic with my comrades brave,
Where sickness sweeps whole regiments to the grave;
Yet I 've escaped; and bear my arms no more;
My age discharged me when I came on shore.
My wife, I 've heard,"—and here he wiped his eyes,—
"In the cold corner of the churchyard lies.
By her consent it was I left my home:
Employment fail'd, and poverty was come;
The bounty tempted me,—she had it all:
We parted; and I 've seen my betters fall.
Yet, as I 'm spared, though in this piteous case,
I 'm trav'lling homeward to my native place;
Though should I reach that dear remember'd spot,
Perhaps Old Grainger will be quite forgot."

All eyes beheld young George with wonder start;
Strong were the secret bodings of his heart;
Yet not indulged: for he with doubts survey'd
By turns the stranger, and the lovely maid.
"Had you no children?" "Yes, young man, I 'd two,
A boy, if still he lives, as old as you;
Yet not my own; but likely so to prove;
Though but the pledge of an unlawful love:
I cherish'd him, to hide a sister's shame:
He shared my best affections and my name.
But why, young folks, should I detain you here?
Go: and may blessings wait upon your cheer.
I too will travel on;—perhaps to find
The only treasure that I left behind.
Such kindly thoughts my fainting hopes revive:
Phœbe, my cherub, art thou still alive?"

Could nature hold! Could youthful love forbear!
George clasp'd the wond'ring maid, and whisper'd, "There!
You're mine for ever!—Oh, sustain the rest;
And hush the tumult of your throbbing breast."
Then to the soldier turn'd, with manly pride,
And fondly led his long-intended bride.
"Here, see your child; nor wish a sweeter flower:
'Tis George that speaks; thou 'lt bless the happy hour!
Nay, be composed; for all will yet be well,
Though here our history 's too long to tell."

A long-lost father found, the mystery clear'd,
What mingled transports in her face appear'd!

The gazing veteran stood with hands upraised,—
"Art thou indeed my child! then, God be praised."
O'er his rough cheeks the tears profusely spread:
Such as fools say become not men to shed;
Past hours of bliss, regenerated charms,
Rose, when he felt his daughter in his arms:
So tender was the scene, the generous Dame
Wept, as she told of Phœbe's virtuous fame,
And the good host, with gestures passing strange,
Abstracted seem'd through fields of joy to range;
Rejoicing that his favour'd roof should prove
Virtue's asylum, and the nurse of Love;
Rejoicing that to him the task was given;
While his full soul was mounting up to Heaven.

But now, as from a dream, his reason sprung,
And heartiest greetings dwelt upon his tongue!
The sounding kitchen floor at once received
The happy group, with all their fears relieved;
"Soldier," he cried, "you've found your girl, 'tis true:
But suffer me to be a father too;
For, never child that blest a parent's knee,
Could show more duty than she has to me.
Strangely she came: Affliction chased her hard:
I pitied her;—and this is my reward!
Here sit you down; recount your perils o'er:
Henceforth be this your home; and grieve no more:
Plenty hath shower'd her dewdrops on my head;
Care visits not my table, nor my bed.
My heart's warm wishes thus then I fulfil:
My Dame and I can live without the mill:
George, take the whole; I'll near you still remain,
To guide your judgment in the choice of grain:
In virtue's path commence your prosperous life,
And from my hand receive your worthy wife.
Rise, Phœbe; rise, my girl!—kneel not to me:
But to that Power who interposed for thee.
Integrity hath mark'd your favourite youth;
Fair-budding Honour, Constancy, and Truth:
Go to his arms;—and may unsullied joys
Bring smiling round me rosy girls and boys!
I'll love them for thy sake. And may your days
Glide on, as glides the stream that never stays;
Bright as whose shingled bed, till life's decline,
May all your worth and all your virtues shine!"

MARKET-NIGHT.

I.

"O WINDS, howl not so long and loud;
Nor with your vengeance arm the snow:
Bear hence each heavy-loaded cloud:
And let the twinkling star-beams glow.

II.

"Now sweeping floods rush down the slope,
Wide scattering ruin—Stars, shine soon!
No other light my love can hope:
Midnight will want the joyous moon.

III.

"O guardian Spirits!—ye that dwell
Where woods and pits, and hollow ways,
The lone night-traveller's fancy swell
With fearful tales, of older days,—

IV.

"Press round him:—guide his willing steed
Through darkness, dangers, currents, snows;
Wait where, from shelt'ring thickets freed,
The dreary heath's rude whirlwind blows.

V.

"Then o'er the hill with furious sweep
It rends the elevated tree—
Sure-footed beast, thy road thou 'lt keep:
Nor storm nor darkness startles thee!

VI.

"O blest assurance, (trusty steed,)
To thee the buried road is known:
Home, all the spur thy footsteps need,
When loose the frozen rein is thrown.

VII.

"Between the roaring blasts that shake
The naked elder at the door,
Though not one prattler to me speak,
Their sleeping sighs delight me more.

VIII.

"Sound is their rest:—they little know
What pain, what cold, their father feels;
But dream, perhaps, they see him now,
While each the promised orange peels.

IX.

"Would it were so!—the fire burns bright,
And on the warming trencher gleams;
In Expectation's raptured sight
How precious his arrival seems!

X.

"I'll look abroad!—'tis piercing cold!—
How the bleak wind assails his breast!
Yet some faint light mine eyes behold;
The storm is verging o'er the west.

XI.

"There shines a star!—O welcome sight!—
Through the thin vapours bright'ning still!
Yet, 'twas beneath the fairest night
The murd'rer stain'd yon lonely hill.

XII.

"Mercy, kind Heaven! such thoughts dispel!
No voice, no foot is heard around!
Perhaps he's near the haunted well!
But Dapple knows each inch of ground.

XIII.

"Distressing hour! uncertain fate!
O Mercy, Mercy, guide him home!
Hark!—then I heard the distant gate,—
Repeat it, Echo; quickly, come!

XIV.

"One minute now will ease my fears—
Or, still more wretched must I be?
No; surely Heaven has spared our tears:
I see him, clothed in snow;—'tis he—

XV.

"Where have you stay'd? put down your load:
How have you borne the storm, the cold?
What horrors did I not forebode!—
That beast is worth his weight in gold."

XVI.

Thus spoke the joyful wife;—then ran
In grateful steams to hide her head:
Dapple was housed, the weary man
With joy glanced o'er the children's bed.

XVII.

"What, all asleep!—so best," he cried:
O, what a night I've travell'd through!
Unseen, unheard, I might have died;
But Heaven has brought me safe to you.

XVIII.

"Dear partner of my nights and days,
That smile becomes thee!—Let us then
Learn though mishap may cross our ways
It is not ours to reckon when."

THE FAKENHAM GHOST.

A BALLAD.

I.

THE lawns were dry in Euston Park;
(Here Truth[1] inspires my tale)
The lonely footpath, still and dark,
Led over hill and dale.

II.

Benighted was an ancient dame,
And fearful haste she made
To gain the vale of Fakenham,
And hail its willow shade.

(1) This ballad is founded on a fact. The circumstance occurred perhaps long before I was born, but is still remembered by my mother, and some of the oldest inhabitants in that part of the country.—R. B.

III.

Her footsteps knew no idle stops,
But follow'd faster still;
And echo'd to the darksome copse
That whisper'd on the hill;

IV.

Where clam'rous rooks, yet scarcely hush'd,
Bespoke a peopled shade;
A many a wing the foliage brush'd,
And hov'ring circuits made.

V.

The dappled herd of grazing deer
That sought the shades by day,
Now started from her path with fear,
And gave the stranger way.

VI.

Darker it grew; and darker fears
Came o'er her troubled mind;
When now, a short quick step she hears
Come patting close behind.

VII.

She turn'd; it stopt!—nought could she see
Upon the gloomy plain!
But as she strove the sprite to flee,
She heard the same again.

VIII.

Now terror seized her quaking frame;
For, where the path was bare,
The trotting ghost kept on the same!
She mutter'd many a prayer.

IX.

Yet once again, amidst her fright,
She tried what sight could do;
When through the cheating glooms of night
A monster stood in view.

X.

Regardless of whate'er she felt,
It follow'd down the plain!
She own'd her sins, and down she knelt,
And said her prayers again.

XI.

Then on she sped: and hope grew strong,
The white park-gate in view;
Which pushing hard, so long it swung
That ghost and all pass'd through.

XII.

Loud fell the gate against the post!
Her heart-strings like to crack;
For, much she fear'd the grisly ghost
Would leap upon her back.

XIII.

Still on, pat, pat, the goblin went,
As it had done before:
Her strength and resolution spent,
She fainted at the door.

XIV.

Out came her husband, much surprised:
Out came her daughter dear:
Good-natured souls! all unadvised
Of what they had to fear.

XV.

The candle's gleam pierced through the night,
Some short space o'er the green;
And there the little trotting sprite
Distinctly might be seen.

XVI.

An ass's foal had lost its dam
Within the spacious park;
And simple as the playful lamb,
Had follow'd in the dark.

XVII.

No goblin he; no imp of sin:
No crimes had ever known.
They took the shaggy stranger in,
And rear'd him as their own.

XVIII.

His little hoofs would rattle round
Upon the cottage floor:
The matron learn'd to love the sound
That frighten'd her before.

XIX.

A favourite the ghost became;
And, 'twas his fate to thrive:
And long he lived and spread his fame,
And kept the joke alive.

XX.

For many a laugh went through the vale;
And some conviction too;—
Each thought some other goblin tale,
Perhaps, was just as true.

THE FRENCH MARINER.

A BALLAD.

I.

An old French Mariner am I,
Whom time hath render'd poor and gray:
Hear, conquering Britons, ere I die,
What anguish prompts me thus to say.

II.

I've rode o'er many a dreadful wave,
I've seen the reeking blood descend:
I've heard the last groans of the brave;—
The shipmate dear, the steady friend.

III.

'Twas when De Grasse the battle join'd,
And struck, on April's fatal morn:
I left three smiling boys behind,
And saw my country's Lillie torn.

IV.

There, as I braved the storms of fate,
Dead in my arms my brother fell;
Here sits forlorn his widow'd mate,
Who weeps whene'er the tale I tell.

V.

Thy reign, sweet peace, was o'er too soon;
War, piecemeal, robs me of my joy:
For, on the blood-stain'd first of June,
Death took my eldest favourite boy.

VI.

The other two enraged arose,
"Our country claims our lives," they said.
With them I lost my soul's repose,
That fatal hour my last hope fled.

VII.

With Brueys the proud Nile they sought:
Where one in ling'ring wounds expired;
While yet the other bravely fought
The Orient's magazine was fired.

VIII.

And must I mourn my country's shame?
And envious curse the conquering foe?
No more I feel that thirst of fame;—
All I can feel is private woe.

IX.

E'en all the joy that victory brings,
(Her bellowing guns, and flaming pride)
Cold, momentary comfort flings
Around where weeping friends reside.

X.

Whose blighted bud no sun shall cheer,
Whose lamp of life no longer shine:
Some parent, brother, child, most dear,
Who ventured, and who died like mine.

XI.

Proud crested fiend, the world's worst foe,
Ambition; canst thou boast one deed,
Whence no unsightly horrors flow,
Nor private peace is seen to bleed.

XII.

Ah! why do these old eyes remain
To see succeeding mornings rise!
My wife is dead, my children slain,
And poverty is all my prize.

XIII.

Yet shall not poor enfeebled age
Breathe forth revenge;—but kneel and pray—
O God, who seest the battle's rage,
Take from men's hearts that rage away.

XIV.

From the vindictive tongue of strife,
Bid hatred and false glory flee;
That babes may meet advancing life,
Nor feel the woes that light on me.

DOLLY.

"Ingenuous trust, and confidence of Love."

I.

The bat began with giddy wing
His circuit round the shed, the tree;
And clouds of dancing gnats to sing
A summer-night's serenity.

II.

Darkness crept slowly o'er the east!
Upon the barn-roof watch'd the cat;
Sweet breathed the ruminating beast
At rest where Dolly musing sat.

III.

A simple maid, who could employ
The silent lapse of evening mild,
And loved its solitary joy:
For Dolly was reflection's child.

IV.

He who had pledged his word to be
Her life's dear guardian, far away,
The flower of yeoman cavalry,
Bestrode a steed with trappings gay.

V.

And thus from memory's treasured sweets,
And thus from love's pure fount she drew
That peace, which busy care defeats,
And bids our pleasures bloom anew:—

VI.

Six weeks of absence have I borne
Since Henry took his fond farewell:
The charms of that delightful morn
My tongue could thus for ever tell.

VII.

He at my window whistling loud,
Aroused my lightsome heart to go:
Day, conquering climb'd from cloud to cloud;
The fields all wore a purple glow.

VIII.

We stroll'd the bordering flowers among:
One hand the bridle held behind;
The other round my waist was flung:
Sure never youth spoke half so kind!

IX.

The rising lark I could but hear;
And jocund seem'd the song to be:
But sweeter sounded in my ear,
"Will Dolly still be true to me!"

X.

From the rude dock my skirt had swept
A fringe of clinging burs so green;
Like them our hearts still closer crept,
And hook'd a thousand holds unseen.

XI.

High o'er the road each branching bough
Its globes of silent dew had shed;
And on the pure-wash'd sand below
The dimpling drops around had spread.

XII.

The sweet-brier oped its pink-eyed rose,
And gave its fragrance to the gale;
Though modest flowers may sweets disclose,
More sweet was Henry's earnest tale.

XIII.

He seem'd, methought, on that dear morn,
To pour out all his heart to me;
As if, the separation borne,
The coming hours would joyless be.

XIV.

A bank rose high beside the way,
And full against the morning sun;
Of heav'nly blue the violets gay
His hand invited one by one.

XV.

The posy with a smile he gave;
I saw his meaning in his eyes:
The wither'd treasure still I have;
My bosom holds the fragrant prize.

XVI.

With his last kiss he would have vow'd;
But blessings crowding forced their way:
Then mounted he his courser proud;
His time was gone, he could not stay.

XVII.

Then first I felt the parting pang;—
Sure the worst pang the lover feels!
His horse unruly from me sprang,
The pebbles flew beneath his heels;

XVIII.

Then down the road his vigour tried,
His rider gazing, gazing still;
"My dearest, I 'll be true," he cried:
And, if he lives, I 'm sure he will.

XIX.

Then haste, ye hours, haste eve and morn,
Yet strew your blessings round my home:
Ere winter's blasts shall strip the thorn,
My promised joy, my love, will come.

LINES,

Occasioned by a Visit to Whittlebury Forest, Northamptonshire, in August, 1800.

ADDRESSED TO MY CHILDREN.

I.

Genius of the forest shades!
Lend thy power and lend thine ear.!
A Stranger trod thy lonely glades,
Amidst thy dark and bounding deer;
Inquiring Childhood claims the verse,
O let them not inquire in vain;
Be with me while I thus rehearse,
The glories of thy silvan reign.

II.

Thy dells by wintry currents worn,
Secluded haunts, how dear to me!
From all but Nature's converse borne,
No ear to hear, no eye to see.
Their honour'd leaves the green oaks rear'd,
And crown'd the upland's graceful swell;
While answering through the vale was heard
Each distant heifer's tinkling bell.

III.

Hail, greenwood shades, that stretching far,
Defy e'en Summer's noontide power,
When August in his burning car
Withholds the cloud, withholds the shower.
The deep-toned low from either hill,
Down hazel aisles and arches green
(The herd's rude tracks from rill to rill),
Roar'd echoing through the solemn scene.

IV.

From my charm'd heart the numbers sprung,
Though birds had ceased the choral lay:
I pour'd wild raptures from my tongue,
And gave delicious tears their way.
Then, darker shadows seeking still,
Where human foot had seldom stray'd,
I read aloud to every hill
Sweet Emma's love, "the Nut-brown Maid."

V.

Shaking his matted mane on high,
The gazing colt would raise his head;
Or, tim'rous doe would rushing fly,
And leave to me her grassy bed:
Where as the azure sky appear'd
Through bowers of every varying form,
'Midst the deep gloom methought I heard
The daring progress of the storm.

VI.

How would each sweeping pond'rous bough
Resist, when straight the whirlwind cleaves,
Dashing in strength'ning eddies through
A roaring wilderness of leaves!
How would the prone descending shower
From the green canopy rebound!
How would the lowland torrents pour!
How deep the pealing thunder sound!

VII.

But peace was there: no lightnings blazed:—
No clouds obscured the face of heaven:
Down each green op'ning while I gazed
My thoughts to home, and you, were given.
O tender minds! in life's gay morn
Some clouds must dim your coming day:
Yet, bootless pride and falsehood scorn,
And peace like this shall cheer your way.

VIII.

Now, at the dark wood's stately side,
Well pleased I met the sun again;
Here fleeting fancy travell'd wide!
My seat was destined to the main:

For, many an oak lay stretch'd at length,
Whose trunks (with bark no longer sheathed)
Had reach'd their full meridian strength
Before your father's father breathed!

IX.

Perhaps they 'll many a conflict brave,
And many a dreadful storm defy;
Then groaning o'er the adverse wave
Bring home the flag of victory.
Go, then, proud oaks: we meet no more!
Go, grace the scenes to me denied,
The white cliffs round my native shore,
And the loud ocean's swelling tide.

X.

"Genius of the forest shades,"
Sweet, from the heights of thy domain,
When the grey ev'ning shadow fades,
To view the country's golden grain!
To view the gleaming village spire
'Midst distant groves unknown to me;
Groves that, grown bright in borrow'd fire,
Bow o'er the peopled vales to thee!

XI.

Where was thy Elfin train, that play
Round Wake's huge oak, their favourite tree,
Dancing the twilight hours away,
Why were they not reveal'd to me?
Yet, smiling fairies left behind,
Affection brought you all to view;
To love and tenderness resign'd,
My heart heaved many a sigh for you.

XII.

When morning still unclouded rose,
Refresh'd with sleep and joyous dreams,
Where fruitful fields with woodlands close,
I traced the births of various streams.
From beds of clay, here creeping rills
Unseen to parent Ouse would steal;
Or, gushing from the northward hills,
Would glitter through Toves' winding dale.

XIII.

But ah! ye cooling springs, farewell!
Herds, I no more your freedom share;
But long my grateful tongue shall tell
What brought your gazing stranger there.
"Genius of the forest shades,
Lend thy power, and lend thine ear;"
Let dreams still lengthen thy long glades,
And bring thy peace and silence here.

SONG FOR A HIGHLAND DROVER RETURNING FROM ENGLAND.

I.

Now fare-thee-well, England; no further I'll roam;
But follow my shadow that points the way home:
Your gay southern shores shall not tempt me to stay;
For my Maggy's at home, and my children at play!
'Tis this makes my bonnet sit light on my brow,
Gives my sinews their strength and my bosom its glow.

II.

Farewell, mountaineers! my companions, adieu;
Soon, many long miles when I'm sever'd from you,
I shall miss your white horns on the brink of the burn,
And o'er the rough heaths, where you'll never return;
But in brave English pastures you cannot complain,
While your drover speeds back to his Maggy again.

III.

O Tweed! gentle Tweed, as I pass your green vales,
More than life, more than love my tired spirit inhales;
There Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
With her bare-footed lasses and mountains so blue;
To the mountains away! my heart bounds like the hind;
For home is so sweet, and my Maggy so kind.

IV.

As day after day I still follow my course,
And in fancy trace back every stream to its source,
Hope cheers me up hills, where the road lies before,
O'er hills just as high, and o'er tracks of wild moor;
The keen polar star nightly rising to view;
But Maggy's my star, just as steady and true.

V.

O ghosts of my fathers! O heroes, look down!
Fix my wandering thoughts on your deeds of renown,
For the glory of Scotland reigns warm in my breast,
And fortitude grows both from toil and from rest;
May your deeds and your worth be for ever in view,
And may Maggy bear sons not unworthy of you.

VI.

Love, why do you urge me so weary and poor?
I cannot step faster, I cannot do more;
I've pass'd silver Tweed; e'en the Tay flows behind:
Yet fatigue I'll disdain;—my reward I shall find;
Thou sweet smile of innocence, thou art my prize;
And the joy that will sparkle in Maggy's blue eyes.

VII.

She'll watch to the southward;—perhaps she will sigh,
That the way is so long, and the mountains so high;
Perhaps some huge rock in the dusk she may see,
And will say in her fondness, "That surely is he!"
Good wife, you're deceived; I'm still far from my home;
Go, sleep, my dear Maggy,—to-morrow I'll come.

A WORD TO TWO YOUNG LADIES.

I.

When tender rose-trees first receive,
On half-expanded leaves, the shower;
Hope's gayest pictures we believe,
And anxious watch each coming flower.

II.

Then, if beneath the genial sun
That spreads abroad the full-blown May,
Two infant stems the rest out-run,
Their buds the first to meet the day,

III.

With joy their op'ning tints we view,
While morning's precious moments fly:
My pretty maids, 'tis thus with you,
The fond admiring gazer, I.

IV.

Preserve, sweet buds, where'er you be,
The richest gem that decks a wife;
The charm of female modesty·
And let sweet music give it life.

V.

Still may the favouring muse be found:
Still circumspect the paths ye tread:
Plant moral truths in fancy's ground;
And meet old age without a dread.

VI.

Yet, ere that comes, while yet ye quaff
The cup of health without a pain,
I'll shake my grey hairs when you laugh,
And, when you sing, be young again.

Both the young ladies had addressed to me a few complimentary lines, (and I am sorry that those of the elder sister were never in my possession;) in return for which I sent the above. It was received on the day on which the younger completed her ninth year. Surely it cannot be ascribed to vanity, if, in gratitude to a most amiable family, I here preserve *verbatim* an effort of a child nine years old. I have the more pleasure in doing it, because I know them to be her own.—R. B.

"Accept, dear Bard, the Muse's genuine thought,
And take not ill the tribute of my heart:—
For thee the laureate wreath of praise I 'll bind;
None that have read thy commendable mind
Can let it pass unnoticed—nor can I—
For by thy lays I know thy sympathy."—F. P.

SONG.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS DOG ROVER.

I.

ROVER, awake! the grey cock crows!
Come, shake your coat and go with me!
High in the east the green hill glows;
And glory crowns our shelt'ring tree.
The sheep expect us at the fold:
My faithful dog, let 's haste away,
And in his earliest beams behold,
And hail, the source of cheerful day.

II.

Half his broad orb o'erlooks the hill,
And, darting down the valley flies,
At every casement welcome still,
The golden summons of the skies.
Go, fetch my staff; and o'er the dews
Let echo waft thy gladsome voice.
Shall we a cheerful note refuse
When rising morn proclaims "Rejoice?"

III.

Now then we 'll start; and thus I 'll sling
Our store, a trivial load to bear:
Yet, ere night comes, should hunger sting,
I 'll not encroach on Rover's share.
The fresh breeze bears its sweets along;
The lark but chides us while we stay:
Soon shall the vale repeat my song;
Go, brush before; away, away!

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS DOG "ROVER."

HUNTING SONG.

I.

Ye darksome woods where Echo dwells,
Where every bud with freedom swells
To meet the glorious day:
The morning breaks; again rejoice;
And with old Ringwood's well-known voice
Bid tuneful Echo play.

II.

We come, ye groves; ye hills, we come:
The vagrant fox shall hear his doom,
And dread our jovial train.
The shrill horn sounds, the courser flies,
While every sportsman joyful cries,
"There's Ringwood's voice again."

III.

Ye meadows, hail the coming throng;
Ye peaceful streams that wind along,
Repeat the hark-away:
Far o'er the downs, ye gales that sweep,
The daring oak that crowns the steep,
The roaring peal convey.

IV.

The chiming notes of cheerful hounds,
Hark! how the hollow dale resounds,
The sunny hills how gay.
But where's the note, brave dog, like thine?
Then urge the steed, the chorus join,
'Tis Ringwood leads the way.

LUCY:

A SONG.

I.

THY favourite bird is soaring still:
My Lucy, haste thee o'er the dale;
The stream 's let loose, and from the mill
All silent comes the balmy gale;
Yet, so lightly on its way,
Seems to whisper "Holiday."

II.

The pathway flowers that bending meet,
And give the meads their yellow hue,
The May-bush and the meadow-sweet
Reserve their fragrance all for you.
Why then, Lucy, why delay?
Let us share the holiday.

III.

Since there thy smiles, my charming maid,
Are with unfeigned rapture seen,
To beauty be the homage paid;
Come, claim the triumph of the green.
Here 's my hand, come, come away;
Share the merry holiday.

IV.

A promise too my Lucy made,
(And shall my heart its claim resign?)
That ere May-flowers again should fade,
Her heart and hand should both be mine.
Hark 'ye, Lucy, this is May;
Love shall crown our holiday.

WINTER SONG.

I.

DEAR boy, throw that icicle down,
And sweep this deep snow from the door:
Old Winter comes on with a frown;
A terrible frown for the poor.
In a season so rude and forlorn,
How can age, how can infancy bear
The silent neglect and the scorn
Of those who have plenty to spare?

II.

Fresh broach'd is my cask of old ale,
Well-timed now the frost is set in;
Here 's Job come to tell us a tale,
We 'll make him at home to a pin.
While my wife and I bask o'er the fire,
The roll of the seasons will prove,
That time may diminish desire,
But cannot extinguish true love.

III.

O the pleasures of neighbourly chat,
If you can but keep scandal away,
To learn what the world has been at,
And what the great orators say;
Though the wind through the crevices sing,
And hail down the chimney rebound;
I 'm happier than many a king
While the bellows blows bass to the sound.

IV.

Abundance was never my lot:
But out of the trifle that 's given,
That no curse may alight on my cot,
I 'll distribute the bounty of Heaven:
The fool and the slave gather wealth;
But if I add nought to my store,
Yet while I keep conscience in health,
I've a mine that will never grow poor.

PEACE.

Since this work went to press, an event of much greater importance than any to which I have been witness, has taken place, to the universal joy (it is to be hoped) of every inhabitant of Europe. My portion of joy shall be expressed while it is warm; and the reader will do sufficient justice if he only believes it to be sincere.—*Oct.* 10, 1801.

I.

HALT! ye legions, sheathe your steel!
Blood grows precious; shed no more;
Cease your toils, your wounds to heal;
Lo! beams of mercy reach the shore!
From realms of everlasting light
The favour'd guest of Heaven is come:
Prostrate your banners at the sight,
And bear the glorious tidings home.

II.

The plunging corpse, with half-closed eyes,
No more shall stain the' unconscious brine;
Yon pendant gay, that streaming flies,
Around its idle staff shall twine.
Behold! along the' ethereal sky
Her beams o'er conquering navies spread;
Peace! Peace! the leaping sailors cry,
With shouts that might arouse the dead.

III.

Then forth Britannia's thunder pours;
A vast reiterated sound!
From line to line the cannon roars,
And spreads the blazing joy around.
Return, ye brave! your country calls;
Return, return, your task is done:
While here the tear of transport falls,
To grace your laurels nobly won.

IV.

Albion cliffs—from age to age,
That bear the roaring storms of heaven,
Did ever fiercer warfare rage,
Was ever peace more timely given!
Wake, sounds of joy! rouse, generous isle!
Let every patriot bosom glow.
Beauty, resume thy wonted smile,
And, Poverty, thy cheerful brow.

V.

Boast, Britain, of thy glorious guests;
Peace, Wealth, and Commerce, all thine own:
Still on contented Labour rests
The basis of a lasting throne.
Shout, Poverty! 'tis Heaven that saves;
Protected Wealth, the chorus raise:
Ruler of war, of winds, and waves,
Accept a prostrate nation's praise.

END OF RURAL TALES.

WILD FLOWERS.

PREFACE.

A MAN of the first eminence, in whose day (fortunately perhaps for me) I was not destined to appear before the public, or to abide the Herculean crab-tree of his criticism, Dr. Johnson, has said, in his preface to Shakspeare, that—"Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature." My representations of nature, whatever may be said of their *justness*, are not *general*, unless we admit, what I suspect to be the case, that nature in a village is very much like nature everywhere else. It will be observed that all my pictures are from humble life, and most of my heroines servant maids. Such I would have them: being fully persuaded that in on other way would my endeavours, either to please or to instruct, have an equal chance of success.

The path I have thus taken, from necessity, as well as from choice, is well understood and approved by hundreds, who are capable of ranging in the higher walks of literature.—But with due deference to their superior claim, I confess, that no recompense has been half so grateful or half so agreeable to me as female approbation. To be readily and agreeably understood, to have my simple Tales almost instinctively relished by those who have so decided an influence over the lives, hearts, and manners of us all, is the utmost stretch of my ambition.

I here venture before the public eye, a selection from the various pieces which have been the source of much

pleasure, and the solace of my leisure hours during the last four years, and since the publication of the "Rural Tales." Perhaps, in some of them, more of mirth is intermingled than many who know me would expect, or than the severe will be inclined to approve. But surely what I can say, or can be expected to say, on subjects of country life, would gain little by the seriousness of a preacher, or by exhibiting fallacious representations of what has long been termed Rural Innocence.

The Poem of "Good Tidings" is partially known to the world, but, as it was originally intended to assume its present appearance and size, I have gladly availed myself of an endeavour to improve it; and, from its present extended circulation, I trust it will be new to thousands.

I anticipated some approbation from such readers as have been pleased with the "Rural Tales;" yet, though I will not falsify my own feelings by assuming a diffidence which I do not conceive to be either manly or becoming, the conviction that some reputation is hazarded in "a third attempt," is impressed deeply on my mind.

With such sentiments, and with a lively sense of the high honour, and a hope of the bright recompense, of applause from the good, when heightened by the self-approving voice of my own conscience, I commit the book to its fate.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

ABNER AND THE WIDOW JONES.

A FAMILIAR BALLAD.

Well! I'm determined; that's enough:—
Gee, Bayard! move your poor old bones,
I'll take to-morrow, smooth or rough,
To go and court the Widow Jones.

Our master talks of stable-room,
And younger horses on his grounds;
'Tis easy to foresee thy doom,
Bayard, thou'lt go to feed the hounds.

But could I win the widow's hand,
I'd make a truce 'twixt death and thee;
For thou upon the best of land
Shouldst feed, and live, and die with me.

And must the pole-axe lay thee low?
And will they pick thy poor old bones?
No—hang me if it shall be so,—
If I can win the Widow Jones.

Twirl went his stick; his curly pate
A bran-new hat uplifted bore;
And Abner, as he leapt the gate,
Had never look'd so gay before.

And every spark of love revived
That had perplex'd him long ago,
When busy folks and fools contrived
To make his Mary answer—No.

But whether, freed from recent vows,
Her heart had back to Abner flown,
And mark'd him for a second spouse.
In truth is not exactly known.

Howbeit, as he came in sight,
She turn'd her from the garden stile,
And downward look'd with pure delight,
With half a sigh and half a smile.

She heard his sounding step behind,
The blush of joy crept up her cheek,
As cheerly floated on the wind,
"Hoi! Mary Jones—what won't you speak?

Then, with a look that ne'er deceives,
She turn'd, but found her courage fled;
And scolding sparrows from the eaves
Peep'd forth upon the stranger's head.

Down Abner sat, with glowing heart,
Resolved, whatever might betide,
To speak his mind, no other art
He ever knew, or ever tried.

And gently twitching Mary's hand—
The bench had ample room for two—
His first word made her understand
The ploughman's errand was to woo.

"My Mary—may I call thee so?
For many a happy day we've seen;
And if not mine, aye, years ago,
Whose was the fault? you might have been!

"All that's gone by: but I've been musing,
And vow'd, and hope to keep it true,
That she shall be my own heart's choosing
Whom I call wife.—Hey, what say you?

"And as I drove my plough along,
And felt the strength that 's in my arm,
Ten years, thought I, amidst my song,
I've been head-man at Harewood farm.

"And now, my own dear Mary's free,
Whom I have loved this many a day,
Who knows but she may think on me?
I'll go hear what she has to say.

"Perhaps that little stock of land
She holds, but knows not how to till,
Will suffer in the widow's hand,
And make poor Mary poorer still.

"That scrap of land, with one like her,
How we might live! and be so blest!
And who should Mary Jones prefer?
Why, surely, him who loves her best!

"Therefore I'm come to-night, sweet wench,
I would not idly thus intrude"——
Mary look'd downward on the bench,
O'erpower'd by love and gratitude;

And lean'd her head against the vine,
With quick'ning sobs of silent bliss,
Till Abner cried, "You must be mine,
You must,"—and seal'd it with a kiss.

She talk'd of shame, and wiped her cheek;
But what had shame with them to do,
Who nothing meant but truth to speak,
And downright honour to pursue?

His eloquence improved apace,
As manly pity fill'd his mind;
"You know poor Bayard; here's the case,—
He's past his labour, old, and blind:

"If you and I should but agree
To settle here for good and all,
Could you give all your heart to me,
And grudge that poor old rogue a stall?

"I'll buy him, for the dogs shall never
Set tooth upon a friend so true;
He'll not live long, but I for ever
Shall know I gave the beast his due.

"'Mongst all I've known of ploughs and carts,
And ever since I learn'd to drive,
He was not match'd in all these parts;
There was not such a horse alive!

"Ready, as birds to meet the morn,
Were all his efforts at the plough;
Then, the mill-brook with hay or corn,
Good creature! how he'd spatter through!

"He was a horse of mighty power,
Compact in frame, and strong of limb;
Went with a chirp from hour to hour;
Whipcord? 'twas never made for him.

"I left him in the shafts behind,
His fellows all unhook'd and gone,
He neigh'd, and deem'd the thing unkind,
Then, starting, drew the load alone!

"But I might talk till pitch-dark night,
And then have something left to say;
But, Mary, am I wrong or right,
Or, do I throw my words away?

"Leave me, or take me and my horse;
I've told thee truth, and all I know:
Truth should breed truth; that comes of course;
If I sow wheat, why wheat will grow."

"Yes, Abner, but thus soon to yield,
Neighbours would fleer and look behind 'em;
Though, with a husband in the field,
Perhaps, indeed, I should not mind 'em.

"I 've known your generous nature well,
My first denial cost me dear;
How this may end we cannot tell,
But, as for Bayard, bring him here."

"Bless thee for that," the ploughman cried,
At once both starting from the seat,
He stood a guardian by her side,
But talk'd of home,—'twas growing late.

Then step for step within his arm,
She cheer'd him down the dewy way;
And no two birds upon the farm
Ere prated with more joy than they.

What news at home? The smile he wore
One little sentence turn'd to sorrow;
An order met him at the door,
"Take Bayard to the dogs to-morrow."

Yes, yes, thought he, and heaved a sigh;
Die when he will he 's not your debtor:
I must obey, and he must die,—
That 's if I can't contrive it better.

He left his Mary late at night,
And had succeeded in the main;
No sooner peep'd the morning light
But he was on the road again!

Suppose she should refuse her hand?
Such thoughts will come, I know not why:
Shall I, without a wife or land,
Want an old horse? then wherefore buy?

From bush to bush, from stile to stile,
Perplex'd he trod the fallow ground,
And told his money all the while,
And weigh'd the matter round and round.

"I'll borrow," that 's the best thought yet;
Mary shall save the horse's life,—
Kind-hearted wench! what, run in debt
Before I know she 'll be my wife?

These women won't speak plain and free.—
Well, well, I 'll keep my service still;
She has not said she'd marry me,
But yet I dare to say she will.

But while I take this shay-brain'd course,
And like a fool run to and fro,
Master, perhaps, may sell the horse!
Therefore this instant home I'll go.

The nightly rains had drench'd the grove,
He plunged right on with headlong pace;
A man but half as much in love
Perhaps had found a cleaner place.

The day rose fair; with team a-field,
He watch'd the farmer's cheerful brow;
And in a lucky hour reveal'd
His secret at his post, the plough.

And there without a whine began:
"Master, you 'll give me your advice;
I'm going to marry—if I can—
And want old Bayard; what 's his price?

"For Mary Jones last night agreed,
Or near upon 't, to be my wife:
The horse's value I don't heed,
I only want to save his life."

"Buy him, hey! Abner! trust me I
Have not the thought of gain in view;
Bayard's best days we 've seen go by;
He shall be cheap enough to you."

The wages paid, the horse brought out,
The hour of separation come;
The farmer turn'd his chair about,
"Good fellow, take him, take him home.

"You 're welcome, Abner, to the beast,
For you 've a faithful servant been;
They 'll thrive, I doubt not in the least,
Who know what work and service mean."

The maids at parting, one and all,
From different windows different tones,
Bade him farewell with many a bawl,
And sent their love to Mary Jones.

He waved his hat, and turn'd away,
When loud the cry of children rose;
"Abner, good bye!" they stopt their play:
"There goes poor Bayard! there he goes!"

Half choked with joy, with love, and pride,
He now with dainty clover fed him,
Now took a short triumphant ride,
And then again got down and led him.

And hobbling onward up the hill,
The widow's house was full in sight,
He pull'd the bridle harder still,—
"Come on, we shan't be there to-night."

She met them with a smile so sweet;
The stable-door was open thrown;
The blind horse lifted high his feet,
And loudly snorting, laid him down.

O Victory! from that stock of laurels
You keep so snug for camps and thrones,
Spare us one twig from all their quarrels,
For Abner and the Widow Jones.

TO MY OLD OAK TABLE.

FRIEND of my peaceful days! substantial friend,
Whom wealth can never change, nor interest bend,
I love thee like a child. Thou wert to me
The dumb companion of my misery,
And oftner of my joys;—then as I spoke,
I shared thy sympathy, Old Heart of Oak!
For surely when my labour ceased at night,
With trembling, feverish hands, and aching sight,
The draught that cheer'd me and subdued my care,
On thy broad shoulders thou wert proud to bear.
O'er thee, with expectation's fire elate,
I 've sat and ponder'd on my future fate:
On thee, with winter muffins for thy store,
I 've lean'd, and quite forgot that I was poor.

Where dropp'd the acorn that gave birth to thee?
Canst thou trace back thy line of ancestry?
We're match'd, old friend, and let us not repine,
Darkness o'erhangs thy origin and mine;
Both may be truly honourable: yet,
We'll date our honours from the day we met;
When, of my worldly wealth the parent stock,
Right welcome up the Thames from Woolwich Dock
Thou camest, when hopes ran high and love was young;
But soon our olive-branches round thee sprung;
Soon came the days that tired a faithful wife,
The noise of children, and the cares of life.
Then, midst the threat'nings of a wintry sky,
That cough which blights the bud of infancy,
The dread of parents, Rest's inveterate foe,
Came like a plague, and turn'd my songs to woe.

Rest! without thee what strength can long survive,
What spirit keep the flame of Hope alive?
The midnight murmur of the cradle gave
Sounds of despair; and chilly as the grave
We felt its undulating blast arise,
Midst whisper'd sorrows and ten thousand sighs.
Expiring embers warn'd us each to sleep,
By turns to watch alone, by turns to weep,

By turns to hear, and keep from starting wild,
The sad, faint wailings of a dying child.
But death, obedient to Heaven's high command,
Withdrew his javelin, and unclench'd his hand;
The little sufferers triumph'd over pain,
Their mother smiled, and bade me hope again.
Yet Care gain'd ground, Exertion triumph'd less,
Thick fell the gathering terrors of Distress;
Anxiety, and Griefs without a name,
Had made their dreadful inroads on my frame;
The creeping dropsy, cold as cold could be,
Unnerved my arm, and bow'd my head to thee.
Thou to thy trust, old friend, hast not been true;
These eyes the bitterest tears they ever knew
Let fall upon thee; now all wiped away;
But what from memory shall wipe out that day?
The great, the wealthy of my native land,
To whom a guinea is a grain of sand,
I thought upon them, for my thoughts were free,
But all unknown were then my woes and me.

Still, Resignation was my dearest friend,
And Reason pointed to a glorious end;
With anxious sighs, a parent's hopes and pride,
I wish'd to live—I trust I could have died!
But winter's clouds pursued their stormy way,
And March brought sunshine with the lengthening day,
And bade my heart arise, that morn and night
Now throbb'd with irresistible delight.
Delightful 'twas to leave disease behind,
And feel the renovation of the mind!
To lead abroad upborne on Pleasure's wing,
Our children, midst the glories of the spring;
Our fellow-sufferers, our only wealth,
To gather daisies in the breeze of health!

'Twas then, too, when our prospects grew so fair,
And Sabbath bells announced the morning prayer;
Beneath that vast gigantic dome we bow'd,
That lifts its flaming cross above the cloud;
Had gain'd the centre of the chequer'd floor;—
That instant, with reverberating roar
Burst forth the pealing organ—mute we stood;—
The strong sensation boiling through my blood,
Rose in a storm of joy, allied to pain,
I wept, and worshipp'd God, and wept again;

And felt, amidst the fervour of my praise,
The sweet assurances of better days.

In that gay season, honest friend of mine,
I mark'd the brilliant sun upon thee shine;
Imagination took her flights so free,
Home was delicious with my book and thee;
The purchased nosegay, or brown ears of corn,
Were thy gay plumes upon a summer's morn;
Awakening memory, that disdains control,
They spoke the darling language of my soul:
They whisper'd tales of joy, of peace, of truth,
And conjured back the sunshine of my youth:
Fancy presided at the joyful birth,
I pour'd the torrent of my feelings forth;
Conscious of *truth* in Nature's humble track,
And wrote "The Farmer's Boy" upon thy back!
Enough, old friend:—thou'rt mine; and shalt partake,
While I have pen to write, or tongue to speak,
Whatever fortune deals me.—Part with thee!
No, not till death shall set my spirit free;
For know, should plenty crown my life's decline,
A most important duty may be thine:
Then, guard me from Temptation's base control,
From apathy and littleness of soul:
The sight of thy old frame, so rough, so rude,
Shall twitch the sleeve of nodding Gratitude;
Shall teach me but to venerate the more
Honest Oak Tables and their guests—the poor;
Teach me unjust distinctions to deride,
And falsehoods gender'd in the brain of Pride;
Shall give to Fancy still the cheerful hour;
To Intellect, its freedom and its power;
To Hospitality's enchanting ring
A charm, which nothing but thyself can bring.
The man who would not look with honest pride
On the tight bark that stemm'd the roaring tide,
And bore him, when be bow'd the trembling knee
Home, through the mighty perils of the sea,
I love him not.—He ne'er shall be my guest;
Nor sip my cup, nor witness how I'm blest;
Nor lean, to bring my honest friend to shame,
A sacrilegious elbow on thy frame;
But thou through life a monitor shalt prove,
Sacred to Truth, to Poetry and Love.

Dec. 1803.

THE HORKEY.

A PROVINCIAL BALLAD.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the descriptive ballad which follows, it will be evident that I have endeavoured to preserve the style of a gossip, and to transmit the memorial of a custom, the extent or antiquity of which I am not acquainted with, and pretend not to inquire.

In Suffolk husbandry the man who (whether by merit or by sufferance I know not) goes foremost through the harvest with the scythe or the sickle, is honoured with the title of *Lord*, and at the Horkey or harvest-home feast collects what he can, for himself and brethren, from the farmers and visitors, to make a "frolic" afterwards, called "the largess spending." By way of returning thanks, though perhaps formerly of much more, or of different signification, they immediately leave the seat of festivity, and with a very long and repeated shout of "A largess," the number of shouts being regulated by the sums given, seem to wish to make themselves heard by the people of the surrounding farms. And before they rejoin the company within, the pranks and the jollity I have endeavoured to describe, usually take place. These customs, I believe, are going fast out of use; which is one great reason for my trying to tell the rising race of mankind that such were the customs when I was a boy.

I have annexed a glossary of such words as may be found by general readers to require explanation. And will add a short extract from Sir Thomas Brown, of Norwich, M.D., who was born three years before Milton, and outlived him eight years.

"It were not impossible to make an original reduction of many words of no general reception in *England*, but of common use in *Norfolk*, or peculiar to the *East-Angle* counties; as Bawnd, Bunny, Thurck, Enemis, Matchly, Sammodithee, Mawther, Kedge, Seele, Straft, Clever, Dere, Nicked, Stingy, Noneare, Feft, Thepes, Gosgood, Kamp, Sibrit, Fangast, Sap, Cothish, Thokish, Bide-owe, Paxwax. Of these, and some others, of no easy originals, when time will permit the resolution shall be attempted; which to effect, the Danish language, new, and more ancient, may prove of good advantage: which nation remained here fifty years upon agreement, and have left many families in it; and the language of these parts had surely been more commixed and perplex, if the fleet of *Hugo de Bones* had not been cast away, wherein threescore thousand soldiers, out of Brittany and Flanders, were to be wafted over, and were, by *John's* appointment, to have a settled habitation in the counties of *Norfolk* and *Suffolk*." Tract the viii. on Languages, particularly the Saxon. Folio, 1686, page 48.

WHAT gossips prattled in the sun,
Who talk'd him fairly down,
Up, Memory! tell; 'tis Suffolk fun,
And lingo of their own.

Ah! *Judie Twichet!*[1] though thou'rt dead,
With thee the tale begins;
For still seems thrumming in my head
The rattling of thy pins.

Thou Queen of knitters! for a ball
Of worsted was thy pride;
With dangling stockings great and small,
And world of clack beside!

'We did so laugh; the moon shone bright;
More fun you never knew;
'Twas Farmer Cheerum's *Horkey night*,
And I, and Grace, and Sue——

(1) Judie Twitchet was a real person, who lived many years with my mother's cousin Bannock, at Honington.

" But bring a stool, sit round about,
And, boys, be quiet, pray;
And let me tell my story out;
'Twas *sitch* a merry day!

" The butcher whistled at the door,
And brought a load of meat;
Boys rubb'd their hands, and cried, 'There's more;'
Dogs wagg'd their tails to see't.

" On went the boilers till the *hake*[1]
Had much ado to bear 'em;
The magpie talk'd for talking sake,
Birds sung;—but who could hear 'em?

" Creak went the jack; the cats were *scared*,
We had not time to heed 'em,
The *owd hins* cackled in the yard,
For we forgot to feed 'em!

" Yet 'twas not I, as I may say,
Because as how, d'ye see,
I only help'd there for the day;
They cou'dn't lay't to me.

" Now Mrs. Cheerum's best lace cap
Was mounted on her head;
Guests at the door began to rap,
And now the cloth was spread.

" Then clatter went the earthen plates—
'Mind, Judie,' was the cry;
I could have *cop't*[2] them at their pates;
'Trenchers for me,' said I,

" 'That look so clean upon the ledge,
And never mind a fall;
Nor never turn a sharp knife's edge:
But fashion rules us all.'

" Home came the jovial *Horkey load*,
Last of the whole year's crop;
And Grace amongst the green boughs rode
Right plump upon the top.

" This way and that the waggon reel'd,
And never queen rode higher;
Her cheeks were colour'd in the field,
And ours before the fire.

(1) A sliding pot-hook. (2) Thrown.

" The laughing harvest-folks, and John,
Came in and look'd askew;
'Twas my red face that set them on,
And then they leer'd at Sue.

" And Farmer Cheerum went, good man,
And broach'd the *Horkey beer;*
And *sitch a mort*[1] of folks began
To eat up our good cheer.

" Says he, ' Thank God for what 's before us;
That thus we meet agen.'
The mingling voices, like a chorus,
Join'd cheerfully, ' Amen.'—

" Welcome and plenty, there they found 'em,
The ribs of beef grew light;
And puddings—till the boys got round 'em,
And then they vanish'd quite!

" Now all the guests with Farmer Crouder,
Began to prate of corn;
And we found out they talk'd the louder,
The oftner pass'd the horn.

" Out came the nuts; we set a-cracking;
The ale came round our way;
By gom, we women fell a clacking
As loud again as they.

" John sung ' Old Benbow' loud and strong,
And I, ' The Constant Swain,'
' Cheer up, my Lads,' was Simon's song,
' We'll conquer them again.'

" Now twelve o'clock was drawing nigh,
And all in merry cue;
I knock'd the cask, ' Oh, ho!' said I,
We 've almost conquer'd you.'

" *My Lord*[2] begg'd round, and held his hat,—
Says Farmer Gruff, says he,
' There 's many a Lord, Sam, I know that,
Has begg'd as well as thee.'

" Bump in his hat the shillings tumbled
All round among the folks;
Laugh if you wool,' said Sam, and mumbled,
' You pay for all your jokes.'

(1) Such a number. (2) The leader of the reapers.

"Joint-stock you know among the men,
To drink at their own charges;
So up they got full drive, and then
Went out to *halloo largess*.[1]

"And sure enough the noise they made!!—
—But let me mind my tale;
We follow'd them, we worn't afraid,
We 'ad all been drinking ale.

"As they stood hallooing back to back,
We, lightly as a feather,
Went sideling round, and in a crack
Had pinn'd their coats together.

"'Twas near upon 't as light as noon;
'*A largess*,' on the hill,
They shouted to the full round moon
I think I hear 'em still!

"But when they found the trick, my stars!
They well knew who to blame,
Our giggles turn'd to ha, ha, ha's,
And *arter* us they came.

"Grace by the tumbril made a squat,
Then ran as Sam came by,
They said she could not run for fat;
I know she did not try.

"Sue round the *neathouse*[2] squalling ran,
Where Simon scarcely dare;
He stopt,—for he 's a fearful man——
'*By gom* there 's *suffen*[3] there!'

"And off set John, with all his might,
To chase me down the yard,
Till I was nearly *gran'd*[4] outright;
He hugg'd so woundy hard.

"Still they kept up the race and laugh,
And round the house we flew;
But hark ye! the best fun by half
Was Simon *arter* Sue.

(1) See Advertisement.
(2) Cow-house.
(3) Something.
(4) Strangled.

"She cared not, dark nor light, not she,
So, near the dairy door
She pass'd a clean white hog, you see,
They 'd *kilt* the day before.

"High on the *spirket*[1] there it hung,—
'Now, Susie—what can save ye?'
Round the cold pig his arms he flung,
And cried, 'Ah! here I have ye!'

"The farmers heard what Simon said,
And what a noise! good lack!
Some almost laugh'd themselves *to dead*,
And others clapt his back.

"We all at once began to tell
What fun we had abroad;
But Simon stood our jeers right well;
—He fell asleep and snored.

"Then in his button-hole upright,
Did Farmer Crouder put
A slip of paper, twisted tight,
And held the candle *to 't*.

"It smoked, and smoked, beneath his nose,
The harmless blaze crept higher;
Till with a vengeance up he rose,
'Grace, Judie, Sue! fire, fire!'

"The clock struck one—some talk'd of parting,
Some said it was a sin,
And *hitch'd* their chairs;—but those for starting
Now let the moonlight in.

"*Owd* women, loitering *for the nonce*,[2]
Stood praising the fine weather;
The menfolks took the hint at once
To kiss them altogether.

"And out ran every soul beside,
A *shanny-pated*[3] crew;
Owd folks could neither run nor hide,
So some *ketch'd* one, some *tew*.

(1) An iron hook. (2) For the purpose.
(3) Giddy, thoughtless.

"They *skriggled*[1] and began to scold,
But laughing got the master;
Some *quack'ling*[2] cried, 'Let go your hold;'
The farmers held the faster.

"All innocent, that I'll be sworn,
There wor'nt a bit of sorrow,
And women, if their gowns *are* torn,
Can mend them on the morrow.

"Our shadows helter skelter danced
About the moonlight ground;
The wondering sheep, as on we pranced,
Got up and gazed around.

"And well they might—till Farmer Cheerum.
Now with a hearty glee,
Bade all good morn as he came near 'em,
And then to bed went he.

"Then off we stroll'd this way and that,
With many voices ringing;
And Echo answer'd us right pat,
As home we rambled singing.

"For, when we laugh'd, it laugh'd again,
And to our own doors follow'd!
'Yo, ho!' we cried; 'Yo, ho!' so plain
The misty meadow halloo'd.

"That's all my tale, and all the fun,
Come, turn your wheels about;
My worsted see!—that's nicely done,
Just held my story out!!"

Poor Judie!—Thus Time knits or spins
The worsted from Life's ball!
Death stopt thy tales, and stopt thy pins,
—And so he'll serve us all.

(1) To struggle quick. (2) Choking.

GOOD TIDINGS;

OR,

NEWS FROM THE FARM.

How vain this tribute; vain this lowly lay;
Yet nought is vain which gratitude inspires!
The Muse, besides, her duty thus approves
To virtue, to her country, to mankind!—THOMSON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

To the few who know that I have employed my thoughts on the importance of Dr. Jenner's discovery, it has generally and almost unexceptionably appeared a subject of little promise; peculiarly unfit indeed for poetry. My method of treating it has endeared it to myself, for it indulges in domestic anecdote. The account given of my infancy, and of my father's burial, is not only poetically, but strictly true, and with me it has its weight accordingly. I have witnessed the destruction described in my brother's family; and I have, in my own, insured the lives of four children by Vaccine Inoculation, who, I trust, are destined to look back upon the small-pox as the scourge of days gone by My hopes are high, and my prayers sincere, for its universal adoption.

The few notes subjoined are chiefly from "Woodville on Inoculation;" and if I may escape the appearance of affectation of research, or a scientific treatment of the subject, I think the egotism, so conspicuous in the poem, (as facts give force to argument,) ought to be forgiven.

WHERE'S the Blind Child, so admirably fair,
With guileless dimples, and with flaxen hair
That waves in every breeze? he's often seen
Beside yon cottage wall, or on the green,

With others match'd in spirit and in size,
Health on their cheeks, and rapture in their eyes;
That full expanse of voice, to childhood dear,
Soul of their sports, is duly cherish'd here;
And, hark! that laugh is his, that jovial cry;
He hears the ball and trundling hoop brush by,
And runs the giddy course with all his might,
A very child in every thing but sight;
With circumscribed but not abated powers,—
Play! the great object of his infant hours;—
In many a game he takes a noisy part,
And shows the native gladness of his heart.
But soon he hears, on pleasure all intent,
The new suggestion and the quick assent;
The grove invites, delight thrills every breast—
To leap the ditch and seek the downy nest
Away they start, leave balls and hoops behind,
And one companion leave—the boy is blind!
His fancy paints their distant paths so gay,
That childish fortitude awhile gives way,
He feels his dreadful loss—yet short the pain,
Soon he resumes his cheerfulness again;
Pond'ring how best his moments to employ,
He sings his little songs of nameless joy,
Creeps on the warm green turf for many an hour,
And plucks by chance the white and yellow flower;
Smoothing their stems, while resting on his knees,
He binds a nosegay which he never sees;
Along the homeward path then feels his way,
Lifting his brow against the shining day,
And, with a playful rapture round his eyes,
Presents a sighing parent with the prize.

She blest *that* day, which he remembers too,
When he could gaze on heaven's ethereal blue,
See the green Spring, and Summer's countless dyes,
And all the colours of the morning rise.—
"When was this work of bitterness begun?
How came the blindness of your only son?"
Thus pity prompts full many a tongue to say,
But never, till she slowly wipes away
Th' obtruding tear that trembles in her eye,
This dagger of a question meets reply:—
"My boy was healthy, and my rest was sound,
When last year's corn was green upon the ground:

From yonder town infection found its way;
Around me putrid dead and dying lay.
I trembled for his fate: but all my care
Avail'd not, for he breathed the tainted air;
Sickness ensu'd—in terror and dismay
I nurs'd him in my arms both night and day,
When his soft skin from head to foot became
One swelling purple sore, unfit to name:
Hour after hour, when all was still beside,
When the pale night-light in its socket died,
Alone I sat; the thought still soothes my heart,
That surely I perform'd a mother's part,
Watching with such anxiety and pain
Till he might smile and look on me again;
But that was not to be—ask me no more:
God keep small-pox and blindness from your door!"

Now, ye who think, whose souls abroad take wing,
And trace out human troubles to their spring,
Say, should Heav'n grant us, in some hallow'd hour,
Means to divest this demon of his power,
To loose his horrid grasp from early worth,
To spread a saving conquest round the earth,
Till ev'ry land shall bow the grateful knee,
Would it not be a glorious day to see?—
That day is come! my soul in strength arise,
Invoke no muse, no power below the skies;
To Heav'n the energies of verse belong,
Truth is the theme, and truth shall be the song;
Arm with conviction every joyful line,
Source of all mercies, for the praise is thine!

Sweet beam'd the star of peace upon those days
When Virtue watch'd my childhood's quiet ways,
Whence a warm spark of Nature's holy flame
Gave the farm-yard an honourable name,
But left one theme unsung: then, who had seen
In herds that feast upon the vernal green,
Or dreamt that in the blood of kine there ran
Blessings beyond the sustenance of man?
We tread the meadow, and we scent the thorn,
We hail the day-spring of a summer's morn;
Nor mead at dawning day, nor thymy heath,
Transcends the fragrance of the heifer's breath:

May that dear fragrance, as it floats along
O'er every flower that lives in rustic song;
May all the sweets of meadows and of kine
Embalm, O Health! this offering at thy shrine!

Dear must that moment be when first the mind,
Ranging the paths of science unconfined,
Strikes a new light; when, obvious to the sense,
Springs the fresh spark of bright intelligence.
So felt the towering soul of MONTAGU,
Her sex's glory, and her country's too;
Who gave the spotted plague one deadly blow,
And bade its mitigated poison flow
With half its terrors; yet, with loathing still,
We housed a visitant with power to kill.
Then when the healthful blood, though often tried,
Foil'd the keen lancet by the Severn side,
Resisting, uncontaminated still,
The purple pest and unremitting skill;
When the plain truth tradition seem'd to know,
By simply pointing to the harmless Cow,
Though wise distrust to reason might appeal;
What, when hope triumph'd, what did JENNER feel!
Where even hope itself could scarcely rise
To scan the vast, inestimable prize!
Perhaps supreme, alone, triumphant stood
The great, the conscious power of doing good,
The power to will, and wishes to embrace
Th' emancipation of the human race;
A joy that must all mortal praise outlive,
A wealth that grateful nations cannot give.
Forth sped the truth immediate from his hand,
And confirmations sprung in every land;
In every land, on beauty's lily arm,
On infant softness, like a magic charm,
Appear'd the gift that conquers as it goes;
The dairy's boast, the simple, saving *Rose!*
Momentous triumph—fiend! thy reign is o'er;
Thou, whose blind rage hath ravaged every shore,
Whose name denotes destruction, whose foul breath
For ever hov'ring round the dart of death,
Fells, mercilessly fells, the brave and base,
Through all the kindreds of the human race.

Who has not heard, in warm, poetic tales,
Of eastern fragrance and Arabian gales?

Bowers of delight, of languor, and repose,
Where beauty triumph'd as the song arose?
Fancy may revel, fiction boldly dare,
But truth shall not forget that *thou* wert there,
Scourge of the world! who, borne on ev'ry wind,
From bow'rs of roses[1] sprang to curse mankind.
The Indian palm thy devastation knows:
Thou sweep'st the regions of eternal snows:[2]
Climbing the mighty period of his years,
The British oak his giant bulk uprears;
He, in his strength, while toll'd the passing bell,
Rejoic'd whole centuries as thy victims fell:
Armies have bled, and shouts of vict'ry rung,
Fame crown'd *their* deaths, *thy* deaths are all unsung:
'Twas thine, while victories claim'd th' immortal lay,
Through private life to cut thy desp'rate way;
And when full power the wondrous magnet gave
Ambition's sons to dare the ocean wave,
Thee, in their train of horrid ills, they drew
Beneath the blessed sunshine of Peru.[3]
But why unskill'd th' historic page explore?
Why thus pursue thee to a foreign shore?
A homely narrative of days gone by,
Familiar griefs, and kindred's tender sigh,
Shall still survive; for thou on every mind
Hast left some traces of thy wrath behind.

There dwelt, beside a brook that creeps along
'Midst infant hills and meads unknown to song,
One to whom poverty and faith were given,
Calm village silence, and the hope of heaven:
Alone she dwelt; and while each morn brought peace,
And health was smiling on her years' increase,
Sudden and fearful, rushing through her frame,
Unusual pains and feverish symptoms came.

(1) The first medical account of the small-pox is given by the Arabian physicians, and is traced no farther back than the siege of Alexandria, about the year of Christ 640.—*Woodville.*

(2) First introduced into Greenland in 1733, and almost depopulated the country.—*Ibid.*

(3) In 1520, says Mr. Woodville, when the small-pox visited New Spain, it proved fatal to one-half of the people in the provinces to which the infection extended; being carried thither by a negro slave, who attended Narvaez in his expedition against Cortes. He adds, about fifty years after the discovery of Peru, the small-pox was carried over from Europe to America by way of Carthagena, when it overran the continent of the New World, and destroyed upwards of 100,000 Indians in the single province of Quito.—*Hist. of Inoculation.*

Then, when debilitated, faint, and poor,
How sweet to hear a footstep at her door!
To see a neighbour watch life's silent sand,
To hear the sigh, and feel the helping hand
Soon woe o'erspread the interdicted ground,
And consternation seized the hamlets round:
Uprose the pest—its widow'd victim died,
And foul contagion spread on every side;
The helping neighbour, for her kind regard,
Bore home *that* dreadful tribute of reward,
Home, where six children, yielding to its power,
Gave hope and patience a most trying hour;
One at her breast still drew the living stream,
And sense of danger never marr'd his dream;
Yet all exclaim'd, and with a pitying eye,
"Whoe'er survives the shock, *that child will die!*"
But vain the fiat,—Heaven restored them all,
And destin'd one of riper years to fall.
Midnight beheld the close of all his pain,
His grave was closed when midnight came again;
No bell was heard to toll, no funeral pray'r,
No kindred bow'd, no wife, no children there;
Its horrid nature could inspire a dread
That cut the bonds of custom like a thread.
The humble church-tower higher seem'd to show,
Illumined by their trembling light below;
The solemn night-breeze struck each shiv'ring cheek;
Religious reverence forbade to speak:
The starting Sexton his short sorrow chid
When the earth murmur'd on the coffin lid,
And falling bones and sighs of holy dread
Sounded a requiem to the silent dead!

"Why tell us tales of woe, thou who didst give
Thy soul to rural themes, and bade them live?
What means this zeal of thine, this kindling fire?
The rescued infant and the dying sire?"
Kind heart, who o'er the pictured Seasons glow'd,
When smiles approved the verse, or tears have flow'd,
Was then the lowly minstrel dear to thee?
Himself appeals—What, if *that child* were HE!
What, if those midnight sighs a farewell gave,
While hands, all trembling, closed his father's grave,
Though love enjoin'd not infant eyes to weep,
In manhood's zenith shall his feelings sleep?

Sleep not, my soul! indulge a nobler flame;
Still the destroyer persecutes thy name.

Seven winters cannot pluck from mem'ry's store
That mark'd affliction which a brother bore;
That storm of trouble bursting on his head,
When the fiend came, and left *two children* dead!
Yet, still superior to domestic woes,
The native vigour of his mind arose,
And, as new summers teem'd with brighter views,
He traced the wand'rings of his darling Muse,
And all was joy—this instant all is pain,
The foe implacable returns again,
And claims a sacrifice; the deed is done—
Another child has fall'n, another son![1]
His young cheek even now is scarcely cold,
And shall his early doom remain untold?
No! let the tide of passion roll along,
Truth *will* be heard, and GOD will bless the song.
Indignant Reason, Pity, Joy, arise,
And speak in thunder to the heart that sighs.
Speak loud to parents;—knew ye not the time
When age itself, and manhood's hardy prime,
With horror saw their short-lived friendships end,
Yet dared not visit e'en the dying friend?
Contagion, a foul serpent lurking near,
Mock'd Nature's sigh and Friendship's holy tear.
Love ye your children?—let that love arise,
Pronounce the sentence, and the serpent dies;
Bid welcome a mild stranger at your door,
Distress shall cease, those terrors reign no more.
Love ye your neighbours?—let that love be shown;
Risk not *their* children while you guard your own;
Give not a foe dominion o'er your blood,
Plant not a poison, e'en to bring forth good;
For, woo the pest discreetly as you will,
Deadly infection must attend him still.
Then, let the serpent die! this glorious prize
Sets more than life and health before our eyes,
For beauty triumphs too! Beauty! sweet name,
The mother's feelings kindling into flame!

(1) I had proceeded thus far with the Poem, when the above fact became a powerful stimulus to my feelings, and to the earnestness of my exhortation.

For, where dwells she, who, while the virtues grow,
With cold indifference marks the arching brow?
Or, with a lifeless heart and recreant blood,
Sighs not for daughters fair as well as good?
That sigh is nature, and cannot decay,
'Tis universal as the beams of day;
Man knows and feels its truth; for, Beauty's call
Rouses the coldest mortal of us all;
A glance warms age itself, and gives the boy
The pulse of rapture, and the sigh of joy.
And is it then no conquest to ensure
Our lilies spotless and our roses pure?
Is it no triumph that the lovely face
Inherits every line of Nature's grace?
That the sweet precincts of the laughing eye
Dread no rude scars, no foul deformity?
Our boast, old Time himself shall not impair,
Of British maids pre-eminently fair;
But, as he rolls his years on years along,
Shall keep the record of immortal song;
For song shall rise with ampler power to speak
The new-born influence of Beauty's cheek,
Shall catch new fires in every sacred grove,
Fresh inspiration from the lips of Love,
And write for ever on the rising mind—
DEAD IS ONE MORTAL FOE OF HUMAN KIND!

Yes, we have conquer'd! and the thought should raise
A spirit in our prayers as well as praise,
For who will say, in Nature's wide domain
There lurk not remedies for every pain;
Who will assert, where Turkish banners fly
Woe still shall reign—the plague shall never die?
Or who predict, with bosom all unblest,
An everlasting fever in the West?
Forbid it, Heaven!—Hope cheers us with a smile,
The sun of Mercy's risen on our isle:
Its beams already, o'er th' Atlantic wave,
Pierce the dark forests of the suffering brave:
There, e'en th' abandon'd sick imbibed a glow,
When warrior nations, resting on the bow,
Astonish'd heard the joyful rumour rise,
And call'd the council of their great and wise:
The truth by female pray'rs was urged along,
Youth ceased the chorus of the warrior song,

And present ills bade present feelings press
With all the eloquence of deep distress ;
Till forth their chiefs[1] o'er dying thousands trod
To seek the white man and his bounteous God :
Well sped their errand ; with a patriot zeal
They spread the blessing for their country's weal.

Where India's swarthy millions crowd the strand,
And round that isle, which crowns their pointed land,
Speeds the good angel with the balmy breath,
And checks the dreadful tyranny of death :
Whate'er we hear to hurt the peace of life,
Of Candian treachery and British strife,
The sword of commerce, nations bought and sold,
They owe to England more than mines of gold ;
England has sent a balm for private woe ;
England strikes down the nation's bitterest foe.

Europe, amidst the clangour of her arms,
While life was threaten'd with a thousand harms,
And Charity was freezing to its source,
Still saw fair Science keep her steady course ;
And, while whole legions fell, by friends deplored,
New germs of life sprung up beneath the sword,
And spread amain.—Then, in our bosoms, why
Must exultation mingle with a sigh ?

Thought takes the retrospect of years just fled,
And, conjuring up the spirits of the dead,
Whispers each dear and venerated name
Of the last victims ere the blessing came,
Worthies, who through the lands that gave them birth
Breathed the strong evidence of growing worth ;
Parents, cut down in life's meridian day,
And childhood's thousand thousand swept away ;
Life's luckless mariners ! ye we deplore
Who sunk within a boat's length of the shore.[2]

A stranger youth, from his meridian sky,
Buoyant with hopes, came here—but came to *die!*

(1) The chiefs of the Cherokee Indians, in North America, have applied to the government of the United States for information on the subject of Vaccine Inoculation, and have spread the practice in the Woods.

(2) So lately as the year 1793, the small-pox was carried to the Isle of France by a Dutch ship, and there destroyed five thousand four hundred persons in six weeks.—*Woodville.*

O'er his sad fate I've ponder'd hours away,
It suits the languor of a gloomy day:
He left his bamboo groves, his pleasant shore,
He left his friends to hear new oceans roar,
All confident, ingenuous, and bold,
He heard the wonders by the white men told;
With firm assurance trod the rolling deck,
And saw his isle diminish to a speck,
Plough'd the rough waves, and gain'd our northern clime,
In manhood's ripening sense and nature's prime.
Oh! had the fiend been vanquish'd ere he came,
The gen'rous youth had spread my country's fame,
Had known that honour dwells among the brave,
And England had not proved the stranger's grave:
Then, ere his waning sand of life had run,
Poor ABBA THULE might have seen his son![1]

Rise, exultation! spirit, louder speak!
Pity, dislodge thy dew-drops from my cheek:
Sleep sound, forefathers; sleep, brave stranger boy,
While truth impels the current of my joy:
To all mankind, to all the earth 'tis given,
Conviction travels like the light of heaven:
Go, blessing, from thy birth-place still expand,
For that dear birth-place is my native land!
A nation consecrates th' auspicious day,
And wealth, and rank, and talents lead the way!
Time, with triumphant hand, shall truth diffuse,
Nor ask the unbought efforts of the Muse.
Mothers! the pledges of your loves caress,
And heave no sighs but sighs of tenderness.
Fathers, be firm! keep down the fallen foe,
And on the mem'ry of domestic woe
Build resolution.—Victory shall increase
Th' incalculable wealth of private peace;
And such a victory, unstain'd with gore,
That strews its laurels at the cottage door,
Sprung from the farm, and from the yellow mead,
Should be the glory of the pastoral reed.
In village paths, hence, may we never find
Their youth on crutches, and their children blind;

(1) Lee Boo, second son of the king of the Pelew Islands, was brought to England by Captain Wilson, and died of the small-pox, at Rotherhithe, in 1784.

Nor, when the milk-maid, early from her bed,
Beneath the may-bush that embow'rs her head,
Sings like a bird, e'er grieve to meet again
The fair cheek injured by the scars of pain;
Pure, in her morning path, where'er she treads,
Like April sunshine and the flow'rs it feeds,
She'll boast new conquests; Love, new shafts to fling,
And Life, an uncontaminated spring.
In pure delight didst thou, my soul, pursue
A task to conscience and to kindred due,
And, true to feeling and to Nature, deem
The dairy's boast thine own appropriate theme;
Hail now the meed of pleasurable hours,
And, at the foot of Science strew thy flow'rs!

THE BROKEN CRUTCH.

A TALE.

"I TELL you, Peggy," said a voice behind
A hawthorn hedge, with wild briers thick entwined,
Where unseen trav'llers down a shady way
Journey'd beside the swaths of new-mown hay,
"I tell you, Peggy, 'tis a time to prove
Your fortitude, your virtue, and your love.
From honest poverty our lineage sprung,
Your mother was a servant quite as young;—
You weep; perhaps *she* wept at leaving home;
Courage, my girl, nor fear the days to come.
Go still to church, my Peggy, plainly drest,
And keep a living conscience in your breast;
Look to yourself, my lass, the maid's best fame,
Beware, nor bring the Meldrums into shame:
Be modest, to the voice of age attend,
Be honest, and you'll always find a friend:
Your uncle Gilbert, stronger far than I,
Will see you safe; on him you must rely;
I've walk'd too far; this lameness, oh! the pain;
Heaven bless thee, child! I'll halt me back again;
But when your first fair holiday may be,
Rise with the lark, and spend your hours with me."

Young Herbert Brooks, in strength and manhood bold,
Who, round the meads, his own possessions, stroll'd,
O'erheard the charge, and with a heart so gay,
Whistled his spaniel, and pursued his way.
Soon cross'd his path, and short obeisance paid,
Stout Gilbert Meldrum and a country maid;
A box upon his shoulder held full well
Her worldly riches, but, the truth to tell,
She bore the chief herself; that noble part,
That beauteous gem, an uncorrupted heart.

And then that native loveliness! that cheek!
It bore the very tints her betters seek.
At such a sight the libertine would glow
With all the warmth that *he* can ever know;
Would send his thoughts abroad without control,
The glimmering moonshine of his little soul.
"Above the reach of justice I shall soar,
Her friends may weep, not punish; they're too poor:
That very thought the rapture will enhance,
Poor, young, and friendless; what a glorious chance!
A few spare guineas may the conquest make,—
I love the treachery for treachery's sake,—
And when her wounded honour jealous grows,
I'll cut away ten thousand oaths and vows,
And tell my comrades, with a manly stride,
How I *a girl outwitted and outlied.*"
Such was not Herbert—he had never known
Love's genuine smiles, nor suffer'd from his frown;
And as to that most honourable part
Of planting daggers in a parent's heart,
A novice quite:—he pass'd his hours away,
Free as a bird, and buxom as the day;
Yet, should a lovely girl by chance arise,
Think not that Herbert Brooks would shut his eyes.

On thy calm joys with what delight I dream,
Thou dear green valley of my native stream!
Fancy o'er thee still waves th' enchanting wand,
And every nook of thine is fairy land,
And ever will be, though the axe should smite
In Gain's rude service, and in Pity's spite,
Thy clustering alders, and at length invade
The last, last poplars, that compose thy shade:
Thy stream shall then in native freedom stray,
And undermine the willows in its way,—
These, nearly worthless, may survive this storm,
This scythe of desolation call'd "Reform."
No army pass'd that way! yet are they fled,
The boughs that, when a schoolboy, screen'd my head:
I hate the murderous axe; estranging more
The winding vale from what it was of yore,
Than e'en mortality in all its rage,
And all the change of faces in an age.
"Warmth," will they term it, that I speak so free;
They strip thy shades,—thy shades so dear to me!

In Herbert's days woods clothed both hill and dale;
But peace, Remembrance! let us tell the tale.

His home was in the valley, elms grew round
His moated mansion, and the pleasant sound
Of woodland-birds that loud at daybreak sing,
With the first cuckoos that proclaim the spring,
Flock'd round his dwelling; and his kitchen smoke,
That from the towering rookery upward broke,
Of joyful import to the poor hard by,
Stream'd a glad sign of hospitality;
So fancy pictures; but its day is o'er;
The moat remains, the dwelling is no more!
Its name denotes its melancholy fall,
For village children call the spot "Burnt-Hall."
But where's the maid, who in the meadow-way
Met Herbert Brooks amongst the new-mown hay?

Th' adventure charm'd him, and next morning rose
The Sabbath, with its silence and repose,
The bells ceased chiming, and the broad blue sky
Smiled on his peace, and met his tranquil eye
Inverted, from the foot-bridge on his way
To that still house where all his fathers lay;
There in his seat, each neighbour's face he knew—
The stranger girl was just before his pew!
He saw her kneel, with meek, but cheerful air,
And whisper the response to every prayer;
And, when the humble roof with praises rung,
He caught the Hallelujah from her tongue,
Rememb'ring with delight the tears that fell
When the poor father bade his child farewell;
And now, by kindling tenderness beguiled,
He blest the prompt obedience of that child,
And link'd his fate with hers:—for, from that day,
Whether the weeks past cheerily away,
Or deep revolving doubts procured him pain,
The same bells chimed—and there she was again!
What could be done? they came not there to woo,
On holy ground,—though love is holy too.

They met upon the foot-bridge one clear morn,
She in the garb by village lasses worn;
He, with unbutton'd frock that careless flew,
And buskin'd to resist the morning dew;

With downcast look she curtsied to the ground,
Just in his path—no room to sidle round.
"Well, pretty girl, this early rising yields
The best enjoyment of the groves and fields,
And makes the heart susceptible and meek,
And keeps alive that rose upon your cheek.
I long'd to meet you, Peggy, though so shy,
I've watch'd your steps, and learn'd your history
You love your poor lame father, let that be
A happy presage of your love for me.
Come then, I'll stroll these meadows by your side,
I've seen enough to wish you for my bride,
And plainly tell you so.—Nay, let me hold
This guiltless hand, I prize it more than gold;
Of that I have my share, but now pursue
Such lasting wealth as I behold in you.
My lands are fruitful, and my gardens gay,
My household cheerful as the summer's day;
One blessing more will crown my happy life,
Like Adam, pretty girl, I want a wife."
Need it be told his suit was not denied,
With youth, and wealth, and candour on his side?
Honour took charge of love so well begun,
And accidental meetings, one by one,
Increased so fast, 'midst time's unheeded flight,
That village rumour married them outright;
Though wiser matrons, doubtful in debate,
Pitied deluded Peggy's hapless fate.
Friends took th' alarm, "And will he then disgrace
The name of Brooks with this plebeian race?"
Others, more lax in virtue, not in pride,
Sported the wink of cunning on one side;
"He'll buy, no doubt, what Peggy has to sell,
A little gallantry becomes him well."
Meanwhile the youth, with self-determined aim,
Disdaining fraud, and pride's unfeeling claim,
Above control, pursued his generous way,
And talk'd to Peggy of the marriage day.
Poor girl! she heard, with anguish and with doubt,
What her too-knowing neighbours preach'd about,
That Herbert would some nobler match prefer,
And surely never, never marry her;
Yet, with what trembling and delight she bore
The kiss, and heard the vow, "I'll doubt no more;

Protect me, Herbert! for your honour's sake
You will," she cried, "nor leave my heart to break."
Then wrote to uncle Gilbert, joys, and fears,
And hope, and trust, and sprinkled all with tears,

Roused was the dormant spirit of the brave,
E'en lameness rose to succour and to save;
For though they both revered young Herbert's name
And knew his unexceptionable fame;
And though the girl had honestly declared
Love's first approaches, and their counsel shared.
Yet, that he truly meant to take for life
The poor and lowly Peggy for a wife;
Or, that she was not doom'd to be deceived,
Was out of bounds:—it *could not* be believed.
"Go, Gilbert; save her; I, you know, am lame;
Go, brother, go; and save my child from shame.
Haste, and I'll pray for your success the while,
Go, go!"—then bang'd his crutch upon the stile:—
It snapt.—E'en Gilbert trembled while he smote,
Then whipt the broken end beneath his coat;
"Ay, ay, I'll settle them; I'll let them see
Who's to be conqu'ror this time, I or he!"

Then off he set, and with enormous strides,
Rebellious mutterings and oaths besides,
O'er cloverfield and fallow, bank and brier,
Pursued the nearest cut, and fann'd the fire
That burnt within him.—Soon the Hall he spied,
And the grey willows by the water side;
Nature cried "halt!" nor could he well refuse;
Stop, Gilbert, breathe awhile, and ask *the news*.
"News?" cried a stooping grandame of the vale,
"Ay, rare news too; I'll tell you such a tale;
But let me rest; this bank is dry and warm;
Do you know Peggy Meldrum at the farm?
Young Herbert's girl? He's clothed her all in white,
You never saw so beautiful a sight!
Ah! he's a fine young man, and such a face!
I knew his grandfather and all his race;
He rode a tall white horse, and look'd so big,
But how shall I describe his hat and wig?"
"Plague take his wig!" cried Gilbert, "and his hat,
Where's Peggy Meldrum? can you tell me *that?*"
"Ay; but have patience, man; you'll hear anon,
For I shall come to her as I go on,

So harkye, friend; his grandfather, I say,"—
"Poh, poh!"—cried Gilbert, as he turn'd away.
Her eyes were fix'd, her story at a stand,
The snuff-box lay half open'd in her hand;
"You great ill-manner'd clown; but I must bear it;
You oaf; to ask the news, and then won't hear it;"
But Gilbert had gain'd forty paces clear,
When the reproof came murmuring on his ear.

Again he ask'd the first that pass'd him by;
A cow-boy stopt his whistle to reply.
"Why, I've a mistress coming home, that's all,
They're playing Meg's diversion at the Hall;
For master's gone, with Peggy, and his cousin,
And all the lady-folks, about a dozen,
To church, down there; he'll marry *one* no doubt,
For that, it seems, is what they're gone about;
I know it by their laughing and their jokes,
Though they *wor'nt* ask'd at church like other folks."

Gilbert kept on, and at the Hall-door found
The winking servants, where the jest went round:
All expectation; ay, and so was he,
But not with heart so merry and so free.
The kitchen table, never clear from beef,
Where hunger found its solace and relief,
Free to all strangers, had no charms for him,
For agitation worried every limb;
Ale he partook, but appetite had none,
And grey-hounds watch'd in vain to catch the bone.
All sounds alarm'd him, and all thoughts perplex'd,
With dogs, and beef, himself, and all things vex'd,
Till with one mingled caw above his head,
Their gliding shadows o'er the court-yard spread,
The rooks by thousands rose: the bells struck up;
He guess'd the cause, and down he set the cup,
And listening, heard, amidst the general hum,
A joyful exclamation, "Here they come!"—
Soon Herbert's cheerful voice was heard above,
Amidst the rustling hand-maids of his love,
And Gilbert follow'd without thought or dread,
The broad oak staircase thunder'd with his tread;
Light tript the party, gay as gay could be,
Amidst their bridal dresses—there came he!

And with a look that guilt could ne'er withstand,
Approach'd his niece and caught her by the hand,
"Now are you married, Peggy, yes or no?
Tell me at once, before I let you go!"
Abrupt he spoke, and gave her arm a swing,
But the same moment felt the wedding ring,
And stood confused.—She wiped th' empassioned tear,
"I am, I am; but is my father here?"
Herbert stood by, and sharing with his bride
That perturbation which she strove to hide;
"Come, honest Gilbert, you're too rough this time,
Indeed here's not the shadow of a crime;
But where's your brother? When did you arrive?
We waited long, for Nathan went at five!"

All this was Greek to Gilbert, downright Greek;
He knew not what to think, nor how to speak.
The case was this; that Nathan with a cart
To fetch them both at daybreak was to start,
And so he did—but ere he could proceed,
He suck'd a charming portion with a reed,
Of that same wedding-ale, which was that day
To make the hearts of all the village gay;
Brimful of glee he trundled from the Hall,
And as for skylarks, he out-sung them all;
Till growing giddy with his morning cup,
He, stretch'd beneath a hedge, the reins gave up;
The horse grazed soberly without mishap,
And Nathan had a most delightful nap
For three good hours.—Then, doubting, when he woke,
Whether his conduct would be deem'd a joke,
With double haste perform'd just half his part,
And brought the lame John Meldrum in his cart.
And at the moment Gilbert's wrath was high,
And while young Herbert waited his reply,
The sound of rattling wheels was at the door;
"There's my dear father now,"—they heard no more,
The bridegroom glided like an arrow down,
And Gilbert ran, though something of a clown,
With his best step; and, cheer'd with smiles and pray'rs,
They bore old John in triumph up the stairs:
Poor Peggy, who her joy no more could check,
Clung like a dewy woodbine round his neck,
And all stood silent——Gilbert, off his guard,
And marvelling at virtue's rich reward,

Loosed the one loop that held his coat before,
Down thump'd the broken crutch upon the floor!
They started, half alarm'd, scarce knowing why,
But through the glist'ning rapture of his eye
The bridegroom smiled, then chid their simple fears,
And roused the blushing Peggy from her tears;
Around the uncle in a ring they came,
And mark'd his look of mingled pride and shame.

"Now honestly, good Gilbert, tell us true,
What meant this cudgel? What was it to do?
I know your heart suspected me of wrong,
And that most true affection urged along
Your feelings and your wrath; you were beside
Till now the rightful guardian of the bride.
But why this cudgel?"—"Guardian! that's the case,
Or else to-day you had not seen my face,
But John about the girl was so perplex'd,
And I, to tell the truth, so mortal vex'd,
That when he broke *this crutch*, and stamp'd and cried,
For John and Peggy, Sir, I could have died,
I know I could; for she was such a child,
So tractable, so sensible, and mild,
That if between you roguery had grown,
(Begging your pardon,) 'twould have been your own;
She would not hurt a fly.—So off I came,
And had you only sought to blast her fame,
Been base enough to act as hundreds would,
And ruin a poor maid—because you *could*,
With this same cudgel, (you may smile or frown,)
An' please you, Sir, I meant to knock you down."

A burst of laughter rang throughout the hall,
And Peggy's tongue, though overborne by all,
Pour'd its warm blessings; for, without control,
The sweet unbridled transport of her soul
Was obviously seen, till Herbert's kiss
Stole, as it were, the eloquence of bliss.
"Welcome, my friends; good Gilbert, here's my hand;
Eat, drink, or rest, they're all at your command;
And whatsoever pranks the rest may play,
Still you shall be the hero of to-day,
Doubts might torment, and blunders may have teased.
But ale can cure them; let us all be pleased.
Thou, venerable man, let me defend
The father of my new dear bosom friend;

You broke your crutch, well, well, worse luck might be,
I'll be your crutch, John Meldrum, lean on me,
And when your lovely daughter shall complain,
Send Gilbert's wooden argument again.
If still you wonder that I take a wife
From the unpolish'd walks of humble life,
I'll tell you on what ground my love began,
And let the wise confute it if they can.
I saw a girl, with nature's untaught grace,
Turn from my gaze a most engaging face;
I saw her drop the tear, I knew full well
She felt for *you* much more than she could tell.
I found her understanding, bright as day,
Through all impediments still forced its way;
On that foundation shall my soul rely,
The rock of genuine humility.
Call'd as she is to act a nobler part,
To rule my household, and to share my heart,
I trust her prudence, confident to prove
Days of delight, and still unfading love;
For, while her inborn tenderness survives,
That heavenly charm of mothers and of wives,
I'll look for joy:—Here come the neighbours all:
Broach the old barrel, feast them great and small,
For I'm determined while the sun's so bright,
That this shall be a wedding-day outright:
How cheerly sound the bells! my charmer, come,
Expand your heart, and know yourself at home.
Sit down, good John."—"I will," the old man cried,
And let me drink to you, Sir, and the bride;
My blessing on you: I am lame and old,
I can't make speeches, and I won't be bold;
But from my soul I wish, and wish with pain,
That brave good gentlemen would not disdain
The poor, because they're poor: for, if they live
'Midst crimes that parents *never can* forgive,
If, like the forest beast, they wander wild,
To rob a father, or to crush a child,
Nature *will* speak, ay, just as Nature feels,
And wish—a Gilbert Meldrum at their heels."

SHOOTER'S HILL.

I.

HEALTH! I seek thee;—dost thou love
The mountain-top or quiet vale,
Or deign o'er humbler hills to rove
On showery June's dark south-west gale?
If so, I'll meet all blasts that blow,
With silent step, but not forlorn;
Though, goddess, at thy shrine I bow,
And woo thee each returning morn.

II.

I seek thee where, with all his might,
The joyous bird his rapture tells,
Amidst the half-excluded light,
That gilds the foxglove's pendant bells;
Where cheerly up the bold hill's side
The deep'ning groves triumphant climb;
In groves Delight and Peace abide,
And Wisdom marks the lapse of time.

III.

To hide me from the public eye,
To keep the throne of Reason clear,
Amidst fresh air to breathe or die,
I took my staff and wander'd here:
Suppressing every sigh that heaves,
And coveting no wealth but thee,
I nestle in the honied leaves,
And hug my stolen liberty.

IV.

O'er eastward uplands, gay or rude,
Along to Erith's ivied spire,
I start, with strength and hope renew'd,
And cherish life's rekindling fire.

Now measure vales with straining eyes,
  Now trace the churchyard's humble names;
Or climb brown heaths, abrupt that rise,
  And overlook the winding Thames.

V.

I love to mark the flow'ret's eye,
  To rest where pebbles form my bed,
Where shapes and colours scatter'd lie,
  In varying millions round my head.
The soul rejoices when alone,
  And feels her glorious empire free;
Sees GOD in every shining stone,
  And revels in variety.

VI.

Ah me! perhaps within my sight,
  Deep in the smiling dales below,
Gigantic talents, Heav'n's pure light,
  And all the rays of genius glow
In some lone soul, whom no one sees
  With *power* and *will* to say "Arise,"
Or chase away the slow disease,
  And Want's foul picture from his eyes.

VII.

A worthier man by far than I,
  With more of industry and fire,
Shall see fair Virtue's meed pass by,
  Without one spark of fame expire!
Bleed not my heart, it will be so,
  The throb of care was thine full long;
Rise, like the Psalmist from his woe,
  And pour abroad the joyful song.

VIII.

Sweet Health, I seek thee! hither bring
  Thy balm that softens human ills;
Come, on the long-drawn clouds that fling
  Their shadows o'er the Surrey Hills.
Yon green-topt hills, and far away
  Where late as now I freedom stole,
And spent one dear delicious day
  On thy wild banks, romantic *Mole*.

IX.

Aye, there's the scene ![1] beyond the sweep
Of London's congregated cloud,
The dark-brow'd wood, the headlong steep,
And valley-paths without a crowd!
Here, Thames, I watch thy flowing tides,
Thy thousand sails am proud to see;
But where the Mole all silent glides
Dwells Peace—and Peace is wealth to me!

X.

Of Cambrian mountains still I dream,
And mouldering vestiges of war;
By time-worn cliff or classic stream
Would rove,—but Prudence holds a bar.
Come then, O Health! I'll strive to bound
My wishes to this airy stand;
'Tis not for *me* to trace around
The wonders of my native land.

XI.

Yet, the loud torrent's dark retreat,
Yet Grampian hills shall fancy give,
And, towering in her giddy seat,
Amidst her own creation live,—
Live, if thou'lt urge my climbing feet,
Give strength of nerve and vigorous breath;
If not, with dauntless soul I meet
The deep solemnity of death.

XII.

This far-seen monumental tower
Records th' achievements of the brave,
And Angria's subjugated power,
Who plunder'd on the Eastern wave.
I would not that such turrets rise
To point out where my bones are laid;
Save that some wandering bard might prize
The comforts of its broad, cool shade.

(1) Box Hill, and the beautiful neighbourhood of Dorking, in Surrey.

XIII.

O Vanity! since thou'rt decreed
Companion of our lives to be,
I'll seek the moral songster's meed,
An earthly immortality;
Most vain!—Oh let me, from the past
Remembering what to man is given,
Lay Virtue's broad foundations fast,
Whose glorious turrets reach to Heav'n.

MARY'S EVENING SIGH.

I.

How bright with pearl the western sky;
How glorious far and wide,
Yon lines of golden clouds that lie
So peaceful side by side!
Their deep'ning tints, the arch of light,
All eyes with rapture see;
E'en while I sigh, I bless the sight
That lures my love from me.

II.

Green hill, that shad'st the valley here,
Thou bear'st upon thy brow
The only wealth to Mary dear,
And all she'll ever know.
There, in the crimson light I see,
Above thy summit rise,
My Edward's form,—he looks to me
A statue in the skies.

III.

Descend, my love, the hour is come,
Why linger on the hill?
The sun hath left my quiet home,
But thou can'st see him still;
Yet why a lonely wanderer stray,
Alone the joy pursue?
The glories of the closing day
Can charm thy Mary too.

IV.

Dear Edward, when we stroll'd along
Beneath the waving corn,
And both confess'd the power of song,
And bless'd the dewy morn;
Your eye o'erflow'd, "How sweet," you cried,
(My presence then could move),—
"How sweet, with Mary by my side,
To gaze and talk of love?"

V.

Thou art not false!—that cannot be;
Yet I my rivals deem
Each woodland charm, the moss, the tree,
The silence, and the stream;
Whate'er, my love, detains thee now,
I'll yet forgive thy stay;
But with to-morrow's dawn come thou,
We'll brush the dews away.

BARNHAM WATER.

I.

FRESH from the Hall of Bounty sprung,[1]
With glowing heart and ardent eye,
With song and rhyme upon my tongue,
And fairy visions dancing by,
The mid-day sun in all his pow'r
The backward valley painted gay;
Mine was a road without a flower,
Where one small streamlet cross'd the way.

II.

What was it rous'd my soul to love?
What made the simple brook so dear?
It glided like the weary dove,
And never brook seem'd half so clear.

(1) On a sultry afternoon, late in the summer of 1802, Euston-Hall lay in my way to Thetford, which place I did not reach until the evening, on a visit to my sister: the lines lose much of their interest except they could be read on the spot, or at least at a corresponding season of the year.

Cool pass'd the current o'er my feet,
Its shelving brink for rest was made;
But every charm was incomplete,
For Barnham Water wants a shade.

III.

There, faint beneath the fervid sun,
I gaz'd in ruminating mood;
For who can see the current run,
And snatch no feast of mental food?
"Keep pure thy soul," it seem'd to say,—
"Keep that fair path by wisdom trod,
That thou may'st hope to wind thy way
To fame worth boasting, and to God."

IV.

Long and delightful was the dream,
A waking dream that Fancy yields,
Till with regret I left the stream,
And plung'd across the barren fields;
To where of old rich abbeys smil'd
In all the pomp of Gothic taste,
By fond tradition proudly styl'd,
The mighty "City in the East."

V.

Near, on a slope of burning sand,
The shepherd boys had met to play,
To hold the plains at their command,
And mark the trav'ller's leafless way.
The trav'ller with a cheerful look
Would every pining thought forbear,
If boughs but shelter'd Barnham Brook,
He'd stop and leave his blessing there.

VI.

The Danish mounds of partial green,
Still, as each mouldering tower decays,
Far o'er the bleak unwooded scene
Proclaim their wond'rous length of days.
My burning feet, my aching sight,
Demanded rest,—why did I weep?
The moon arose, and such a night!
Good Heav'n! it was a sin to sleep.

VII.

All rushing came thy hallow'd sighs,
Sweet Melancholy, from my breast:
"'Tis here that Eastern greatness lies,
That Might, Renown, and Wisdom rest!
Here funeral rites the priesthood gave
To chiefs who sway'd prodigious powers,
The Bigods and the Mowbrays brave,
From Framlingham's imperial towers."

VIII.

Full of the mighty deeds of yore,
I bade good-night the trembling beam;
Fancy e'en heard the battle's roar,
Of what but slaughter could I dream?
Bless'd be that night, that trembling beam,
Peaceful excursions Fancy made;
All night I heard the bubbling stream,
Yet, Barnham Water wants a shade.

IX.

Whatever hurts my country's fame,
When wits and mountaineers deride,
To me grows serious, for I name
My native plains and streams with pride.
No mountain charms have I to sing,
No loftier minstrel's rights invade;
From trifles oft *my* raptures spring;—
Sweet Barnham Water wants a shade.

A VISIT TO RANELAGH.

I.

To Ranelagh, once in my life,
By good-natur'd force I was driven;
The nations had ceas'd their long strife,
And PEACE[1] beam'd her radiance from Heav'n.
What wonders were there to be found,
That a clown might enjoy or disdain?
First we trac'd the gay ring all around,
Aye—and then we went round it again.

(1) A grand *fête*, in honour of the peace of 1802.

II.

A thousand feet rustled on mats,
A carpet that once had been green;
Men bow'd with their outlandish hats,
With corners so fearfully keen!
Fair maids, who at home in their haste
Had left all clothing else but a train,
Swept the floor clean, as slowly they pac'd,
And then—walk'd round and swept it again.

III.

The music was truly enchanting!
Right glad was I when I came near it;
But in fashion I found I was wanting;—
'Twas the fashion to walk and not hear it!
A fine youth, as beauty beset him,
Look'd smilingly round on the train;
"The king's nephew!" they cried, as they met him;
Then—we went round and met him again.

IV.

Huge paintings of Heroes and Peace
Seem'd to smile at the sound of the fiddle,
Proud to fill up each tall shining space
Round the lantern[1] that stood in the middle.
And GEORGE'S head, too; Heav'n screen him!
May he finish in peace his long reign!
And what did we when we had seen him?
Why—went round and saw him again.

V.

A bell rang, announcing new pleasures;
A crowd in an instant prest hard,
Feathers nodded, perfumes shed their treasures,
Round a door that led into the yard.
'Twas peopled all o'er in a minute,
As a white flock would cover a plain!
We had seen every soul that was in it,
Then we went round and saw them again.

(1) The intervals between the pillars in the centre of the Rotunda were filled up by transparent paintings.

VI.

But now came a scene worth the showing,
The fireworks! midst laughs and huzzas,
With explosions the sky was all glowing,
Then down stream'd a million of stars;
With a rush the bright rockets ascended,
Wheels spurted blue fires like a rain;
We turn'd with regret when 'twas ended,
Then—star'd at each other again.

VII.

There thousands of gay lamps aspir'd
To the tops of the trees and beyond;
And, what was most hugely admir'd,
They look'd all up-side-down in a pond!
The blaze scarce an eagle could bear,
And an owl had most surely been slain;
We return'd to the circle, and there——
And there we went round it again.

VIII.

'Tis not wisdom to love without reason,
Or to censure without knowing why:
I had witness'd no crime, nor no treason,
"O life, 'tis thy picture," said I.
'Tis just thus we saunter along,
Months and years bring their pleasure or pain;
We sigh midst the *right* and *the wrong*;—
And then *we go round them again!*

THE WOODLAND HALLÓ.

(PERHAPS) ADAPTED FOR MUSIC.

I.

In our cottage, that peeps from the skirts of the wood,
I am mistress, no mother have I;
Yet blithe are my days, for my father is good,
And kind is my lover hard by;
They both work together beneath the green shade,
Both woodmen, my father and Joe;
Where I've listen'd whole hours to the echo that made
So much of a laugh or—Halló.

II.

From my basket at noon they expect their supply,
And with joy from my threshold I spring;
For the woodlands I love, and the oaks waving high,
And Echo that sings as I sing.
Though deep shades delight me, yet love is my food,
As I call the dear name of my Joe;
His musical shout is the pride of the wood,
And my heart leaps to hear the—Halló.

III.

Simple flowers of the grove, little birds live at ease,
I wish not to wander from you;
I'll still dwell beneath the deep roar of your trees,
For I know that my Joe will be true.
The trill of the robin, the coo of the dove,
Are charms that I'll never forego;
But resting through life on the bosom of love,
Will remember the Woodland Halló.

LOVE OF THE COUNTRY.

WRITTEN AT CLARE HALL, HERTS, JUNE, 1804.

I.

WELCOME silence! welcome peace!
Oh most welcome, holy shade!
Thus I prove, as years increase,
My heart and soul for quiet made.
Thus I fix my firm belief
While rapture's rushing tears descend,
That every flower and every leaf
Is moral Truth's unerring friend.

II.

I would not for a world of gold
That Nature's lovely face should tire;
Fountain of blessings yet untold:
Pure source of intellectual fire!

Fancy's fair buds, the germs of song,
  Unquicken'd midst the world's rude strife,
Shall sweet retirement render strong,
  And morning silence bring to life.

III.

Then tell me not that I shall grow
  Forlorn, that fields and woods will cloy;
From Nature and her changes flow
  An everlasting tide of joy.
I grant that summer heats will burn,
  That keen will come the frosty night;
But both shall please: and each in turn
  Yield Reason's most supreme delight.

IV.

Build me a shrine, and I could kneel
  To rural gods, or prostrate fall;
Did I not see, did I not feel,
  That one GREAT SPIRIT governs all.
O Heaven, permit that I may lie
  Where o'er my corse green branches wave;
And those who from life's tumult fly
  With kindred feelings press my grave.

MAY-DAY WITH THE MUSES

THE INVITATION.

O FOR the strength to paint my joy once more!
That joy I feel when Winter's reign is o'er;
When the dark despot lifts his hoary brow,
And seeks his polar-realm's eternal snow.
Though black November's fogs oppress my brain,
Shake every nerve, and struggling fancy chain;
Though time creeps o'er me with his palsied hand,
And frost-like bids the stream of passion stand,
And through his dry teeth sends a shivering blast,
And points to more than fifty winters past,
Why should I droop with heartless, aimless eye?
Friends start around, and all my phantoms fly,
And Hope, upsoaring with expanded wing,
Unfolds a scroll, inscribed "Remember Spring."
Stay, sweet enchantress, charmer of my days,
And glance thy rainbow colours o'er my lays;
Be to poor Giles what thou hast ever been,
His heart's warm solace and his sovereign queen;
Dance with his rustics when the laugh runs high,
Live in the lover's heart, the maiden's eye;
Still be propitious when his feet shall stray
Beneath the bursting hawthorn-buds of May,
Warm every thought, and brighten every hour,
And let him feel thy presence and thy power.

SIR AMBROSE HIGHAM, in his eightieth year,
With memory unimpair'd, and conscience clear,
His English heart untrammell'd, and full blown
His senatorial honours and renown,
Now, basking in his plenitude of fame,
Resolved, in concert with his noble dame,
To drive to town no more—no more by night
To meet in crowded courts a blaze of light,
In streets a roaring mob with flags unfurl'd,
And all the senseless discord of the world,—

But calmly wait the hour of his decay,
The broad bright sunset of his glorious day;
And where he first drew breath at last to fall,
Beneath the towering shades of Oakly Hall.[1]

Quick spread the news through hamlet, field, and farm,
The labourer wiped his brow, and stayed his arm;
'Twas news to him of more importance far,
Than change of empires or the yells of war;
It breathed a hope which nothing could destroy,
Poor widows rose, and clapp'd their hands for joy
Glad voices rang at every cottage door,
"Good old Sir Ambrose goes to town no more."
Well might the village bells the triumph sound,
Well might the voice of gladness ring around;
Where sickness raged, or want allied to shame,
Sure as the sun his well-timed succour came;
Food for the starving child, and warmth and wine
For age that totter'd in its last decline.
From him they shared the embers' social glow;
He fed the flame that glanced along the snow,
When winter drove his storms across the sky,
And pierced the bones of shrinking poverty.

Sir Ambrose loved the Muses, and would pay
Due honours even to the ploughman's lay;
Would cheer the feebler bard, and with the strong
Soar to the noblest energies of song;
Catch the rib-shaking laugh, or from his eye
Dash silently the tear of sympathy.
Happy old man!—with feelings such as these
The seasons all can charm, and trifles please;
And hence a sudden thought, a new-born whim,
Would shake his cup of pleasure to the brim,
Turn scoffs, and doubts, and obstacles aside,
And instant action follow like a tide.

Time past, he had on his paternal ground
With pride the latent sparks of genius found
In many a local ballad, many a tale,
As wild and brief as cowslips in the dale,
Though unrecorded as the gleams of light
That vanish in the quietness of night.
"Why not," he cried, as from his couch he rose,
"To cheer my age, and sweeten my repose,

(1) The seat of Sir Ambrose is situated in the author's imagination only the reader must build Oakly Hall where he pleases.

Why not be just and generous in time,
And bid my tenants pay their rents in rhyme?
For one half year they shall.—A feast shall bring
A crowd of merry faces in the spring;—
Here, pens, boy, pens; I'll weigh the case no more,
But write the summons:—go, go, shut the door.

" 'All ye on Oakly manor dwelling,
Farming, labouring, buying, selling,
Neighbours! banish gloomy looks,
My grey old steward shuts his books.
Let not a thought of winter's rent
Destroy one evening's merriment;
I ask not gold, but tribute found
Abundant on Parnassian ground.
Choose, ye who boast the gift, your themes
Of joy or pathos, tales or dreams,
Choose each a theme;—but, harkye, bring
No stupid ghost, no vulgar thing;
Fairies, indeed, may wind their way,
And sparkle through the brightest lay:
I love their pranks, their favourite green,
And, could the little sprites be seen,
Were I a king, I'd sport with them,
And dance beneath my diadem.
But surely fancy need not brood
O'er midnight darkness, crimes, and blood,
In magic cave or monk's retreat,
Whilst the bright world is at her feet;
Whilst to her boundless range is given,
By night, by day, the lights of heaven,
And all they shine upon; whilst Love
Still reigns the monarch of the grove,
And real life before her lies
In all its thousand, thousand dyes.
Then bring me nature, bring me sense,
And joy shall be your recompense:
On Old May-day I hope to see
All happy:—leave the rest to me.
A general feast shall cheer us all
Upon the lawn that fronts the Hall,
With tents for shelter, laurel boughs
And wreaths of every flower that blows.
The months are wending fast away;
Farewell,—remember Old May-day.' "

Surprise, and mirth, and gratitude, and jeers,
The clown's broad wonder, the enthusiast's tears,
Fresh gleams of comfort on the brow of care,
The sectary's cold shrug, the miser's stare,
Were all excited, for the tidings flew
As quick as scandal the whole country through.
"Rent paid by rhymes at Oakly may be great,
But rhymes for taxes would appal the state,"
Exclaim'd th' exciseman,—"and then tithes, alas!
Why there, again, 'twill never come to pass."—
Thus all still ventured, as the whim inclined,
Remarks as various as the varying mind:
For here Sir Ambrose sent a challenge forth,
That claim'd a tribute due to sterling worth;
And all, whatever might their host regale,
Agreed to share the feast and drink his ale.

Now shot through many a heart a secret fire,
A new-born spirit, an intense desire
For once to catch a spark of local fame,
And bear a poet's honourable name!
Already some aloft began to soar,
And some to think who never thought before;
But O, what numbers all their strength applied,
Then threw despairingly the task aside
With feign'd contempt, and vow'd they'd never tried.
Did dairy-wife neglect to turn her cheese,
Or idling miller lose the favouring breeze;
Did the young ploughman o'er the furrows stand,
Or stalking sower swing an empty hand,
One common sentence on their heads would fall,
'Twas Oakly banquet had bewitched them all.
Loud roar'd the winds of March, with whirling snow,
One brightening hour an April breeze would blow;
Now hail, now hoar-frost bent the flowret's head,
Now struggling beams their languid influence shed,
That scarce a cowering bird yet dared to sing
'Midst the wild changes of our island spring.
Yet, shall the Italian goatherd boasting cry,
"Poor Albion! when hadst thou so clear a sky?"
And deem that Nature smiles for him alone,
Her renovated beauties all his own?
No:—let our April showers by night descend,
Noon's genial warmth with twilight stillness blend,

The broad Atlantic pour her pregnant breath,
And rouse the vegetable world from death ;
Our island spring is rapture's self to me,
All I have seen, and all I wish to see.

Thus came the jovial day ; no streaks of red
O'er the broad portal of the morn were spread,
But one high-sailing mist of dazzling white,
A screen of gossamer, a magic light,
Doom'd instantly, by simplest shepherd's ken,
To reign awhile, and be exhaled at ten.
O'er leaves, o'er blossoms, by his power restored,
Forth came the conquering sun and look'd abroad ;
Millions of dew-drops fell, yet millions hung,
Like words of transport trembling on the tongue,
Too strong for utterance :—Thus the infant boy,
With rosebud cheeks, and features tuned to joy,
Weeps while he struggles with restraint or pain;
But change the scene, and make him laugh again,
His heart rekindles, and his cheek appears
A thousand times more lovely through his tears.
From the first glimpse of day a busy scene
Was that high swelling lawn, that destined green,
Which shadowless expanded far and wide,
The mansion's ornament, the hamlet's pride ;
To cheer, to order, to direct, contrive,
Even old Sir Ambrose had been up at five ;
There his whole household labour'd in his view,—
But light is labour where the task is new.
Some wheel'd the turf to build a grassy throne
Round a huge thorn that spread his boughs alone,
Rough-rin'd and bold, as master of the place ;
Five generations of the Higham race
Had pluck'd his flowers, and still he held his sway
Waved his white head, and felt the breath of May.
Some from the green-house ranged exotics round,
To bask in open day on English ground :
And 'midst them in a line of splendour drew
Long wreaths and garlands, gather'd in the dew.
Some spread the snowy canvas, propp'd on high
O'er shelter'd tables with their whole supply;
Some swung the biting scythe with merry face,
And cropp'd the daisies for a dancing space.
Some roll'd the mouldy barrel in his might,
From prison'd darkness into cheerful light,

And fenced him round with cans; and others bore
The creaking hamper with its costly store,
Well cork'd, well flavour'd, and well tax'd, that came
From Lusitanian mountains, dear to fame,
Whence GAMA steer'd, and led the conquering way
To eastern triumphs and the realms of day.
A thousand minor tasks fill'd every hour,
Till the sun gain'd the zenith of his power,
When every path was throng'd with old and young,
And many a skylark in his strength upsprung
To bid them welcome.—Not a face was there
But for May-day at least had banish'd care:
No cringing looks, no pauper tales to tell,
No timid glance, they knew their host too well,—
Freedom was there, and joy in every eye:
Such scenes were England's boast in days gone by.
Beneath the thorn was good Sir Ambrose found,
His guests an ample crescent form'd around;
Nature's own carpet spread the space between,
Where blithe domestics plied in gold and green.
The venerable chaplain waved his wand,
And silence follow'd as he stretch'd his hand,
And with a trembling voice, and heart sincere,
Implored a blessing on th' abundant cheer.
Down sat the mingling throng, and shared a feast
With hearty welcomes given, by love increased;
A patriarch family, a close-linked band,
True to their rural chieftain, heart and hand;
The deep carouse can never boast the bliss,
The animation of a scene like this.

At length the damask cloths were whisk'd away,
Like fluttering sails upon a summer's day;
The hey-day of enjoyment found repose;
The worthy baronet majestic rose;
They view'd him, while his ale was filling ro'
The monarch of his own paternal ground.
His cup was full, and where the blossoms bow'd,
Over his head, Sir Ambrose spoke aloud,
Nor stopp'd a dainty form or phrase to cull—
His heart elated, like his cup, was full:—
"Full be your hopes, and rich the crops that fall;
Health to my neighbours, happiness to all!"
Dull must that clown be, dull as winter's sleet,
Who would not instantly be on his feet:

An echoing health to mingling shouts gave place,
"Sir Ambrose Higham, and his noble race!"

Avaunt, Formality! thou bloodless dame,
With dripping besom quenching Nature's flame;
Thou cankerworm, who liv'st but to destroy,
And eat the very heart of social joy;—
Thou freezing mist round intellectual mirth,
Thou spell-bound vagabond of spurious birth,
Away! away! and let the sun shine clear,
And all the kindnesses of life appear.

With mild complacency and smiling brow,
The host look'd round, and bade the goblets flow;
Yet curiously anxious to behold
Who first would pay in rhymes instead of gold;
Each eye inquiring through the ring was glanced
To see who dared the task, who first advanced;
That instant started Philip from the throng,
Philip, a farmer's son, well known for song,—
And, as the mingling whispers round him ran,
He humbly bowed, and timidly began:—

THE DRUNKEN FATHER.

Poor Ellen married Andrew Hall,
Who dwells beside the moor,
Where yonder rose-tree shades the wall,
And woodbines grace the door.

Who does not know how blest, how loved
Were her mild laughing eyes
By every youth!—but Andrew proved
Unworthy of his prize.

In tippling was his whole delight,
Each sign-post barr'd his way;
He spent in muddy ale at night
The wages of the day.

Though Ellen still had charms, was young,
And he in manhood's prime,
She sad beside her cradle sung,
And sigh'd away her time.

One cold bleak night, the stars were hid
In vain she wish'd him home;
Her children cried, half cheer'd, half chid,
"O when will father come?"

Till Caleb, nine years old, upsprung,
And kick'd his stool aside,
And younger Mary round him clung,
"I'll go, and you shall guide."

The children knew each inch of ground,
Yet Ellen had her fears;
Light from the lantern glimmer'd round,
And show'd her falling tears.

"Go by the mill and down the lane;
Return the same way home:
Perhaps you'll meet him, give him light;
O how I *wish* he'd come!"

Away they went, as close and true
As lovers in the shade,
And Caleb swung his father's staff
At every step he made.

The noisy mill-clack rattled on,
They saw the water flow,
And leap in silvery foam along,
Deep murmuring below.

"We'll soon be there," the hero said,
"Come on, 'tis but a mile,—
Here's where the cricket-match was play'd,
And here's the shady stile.

"How the light shines up every bough!
How strange the leaves appear!
Hark!—What was that?—'tis silent now,
Come, Mary, never fear."

The staring oxen breathed aloud,
But never dream'd of harm;
A meteor glanced along the cloud
That hung o'er Wood-Hill Farm.

Old Cæsar bark'd and howl'd hard by,
All else was still as death;
But Caleb was ashamed to cry,
And Mary held her breath.

At length they spied a distant light,
And heard a chorus brawl;
Wherever drunkards stopp'd at night,
Why there was Andrew Hall.

The house was full, the landlord gay,
The bar-maid shook her head,
And wish'd the boobies far away
That kept her out of bed.

There Caleb enter'd, firm, but mild,
And spoke in plaintive tone:—
"My mother could not leave the child,
So we are come alone."

E'en drunken Andrew felt the blow
That innocence can give,
When its resistless accents flow
To bid affection live.

"I'm coming, loves, I'm coming now,"—
Then, shuffling o'er the floor,
Contrived to make his balance true,
And led them from the door.

The plain broad path that brought him there
By day, though faultless then,
Was up and down and narrow grown,
Though wide enough for ten.

The stiles were wretchedly contrived,
The stars were all at play,
And many a ditch had moved itself
Exactly in his way.

But still conceit was uppermost,
That stupid kind of pride:—
"Dost think I cannot see a post?
Dost think I want a guide?

"Why, Mary, how you twist and twirl!
Why dost not keep the track?
I'll carry thee home safe, my girl,"—
Then swung her on his back.

Poor Caleb muster'd all his wits
To bear the light ahead,
As Andrew reel'd and stopp'd by fits,
Or ran with thundering tread.

Exult, ye brutes, traduced and scorn'd,
Though true to Nature's plan;
Exult, ye bristled, and ye horn'd,
When infants govern man.

Down to the mill-pool's dangerous brink
The headlong party drove;
The boy alone had power to think,
While Mary scream'd above.

"Stop!" Caleb cried, "you've lost the path;
The water 's close before;
I see it shine, 'tis very deep,—
Why, don't you hear it roar?"

And then in agony exclaim'd,
"O where's my mother *now?*"
The Solomon of hops and malt
Stopp'd short and made a bow.

His head was loose, his neck disjointed,
It cost him little trouble;
But, to be stopp'd and disappointed,
Poh! danger was a bubble.

Onward he stepp'd, the boy alert,
Calling his courage forth,
Hung like a log on Andrew's skirt,
And down he brought them both.

The tumbling lantern reach'd the stream,
Its hissing light soon gone;
'Twas night, without a single gleam,
And terror reign'd alone.

A general scream the miller heard,
Then rubb'd his eyes and ran,
And soon his welcome light appear'd,
As grumbling he began:—

"What have we here, and whereabouts?
Why, what a hideous squall!
Some drunken fool! I thought as much—
'Tis only Andrew Hall!

"Poor children!" tenderly he said,
"But now the danger's past."
They thank'd him for his light and aid,
And drew near home at last.

But who upon the misty path
To meet them forward press'd?
'Twas Ellen, shivering, with a babe
Close folded to her breast.

Said Andrew, "Now you're glad, I know,
To se-se-see us come;—
But I have taken care of both,
And brought them bo-bo-both safe home."

With Andrew vex'd, of Mary proud,
But prouder of her boy,
She kiss'd them both, and sobb'd aloud,—
The children cried for joy.

But what a home at last they found!
Of comforts all bereft;
The fire out, the last candle gone,
And not one penny left.

But Caleb quick as lightning flew,
And raised a light instead;
And as the kindling brands he blew,
His father snored in bed.

No brawling, boxing termagant
Was Ellen, though offended;
Whoever knew a fault like this
By violence amended?

No: she was mild as April morn,
And Andrew loved her too;
She rose at daybreak, though forlorn,
To try what love could do.

And as her waking husband groan'd,
And roll'd his burning head,
She spoke with all the power of truth,
Down kneeling by his bed.

"Dear Andrew, hear me,—though distress'd
Almost too much to speak,—
This infant starves upon my breast—
To scold I am too weak.

"I work, I spin, I toil all day,
Then leave my work to cry,
And start with horror when I think
You wish to see me die.

"But *do* you wish it? can that bring
More comfort, or more joy?
Look round the house, how destitute!
Look at your ragged boy!

"That boy should make a father proud,
If any feeling can;
Then save your children, save your wife,
Your honour as a man.

"Hear me, for God's sake hear me now,
And act a father's part!"
The culprit bless'd her angel-tongue,
And clasp'd her to his heart;

And would have vow'd, and would have sworn,
But Ellen kiss'd him dumb,—
"Exert your mind, vow to *yourself*,
And better days will come.

"I shall be well when you are kind,
And you'll be better too."—
"I'll drink no more,"—he quick rejoin'd,—
"Be't poison if I do."

From that bright day his plants, his flowers,
His crops began to thrive,
And for three years has Andrew been
The soberest man alive.

Soon as he ended, acclamations rose,
Endang'ring modesty and self-repose,
Till the good host his prudent counsel gave,
Then listen'd all, the flippant and the grave.
"Let not applauses vanity inspire,
Deter humility, or damp desire;
Neighbours we are, then let the stream run fair,
And every couplet be as free as air;
Be silent when each speaker claims his right,
Enjoy the day as I enjoy the sight:
They shall not class us with the knavish elves,
Who banish shame, and criticise themselves."
Thenceforward converse flow'd with perfect ease,
'Midst country wit, and rustic repartees.
One drank to Ellen, if such might be found,
And archly glanced at female faces round.

If one with tilted can began to bawl,
Another cried, "Remember Andrew Hall!"
Then, multifarious topics, corn and hay,
Vestry intrigues, the rates they had to pay,
The thriving stock, the lands too wet, too dry,
And all that bears on fruitful husbandry,
Ran mingling through the crowd—a crowd that might,
Transferr'd to canvas, give the world delight;
A scene that Wilkie might have touch'd with pride—
The May-day banquet then had never died.
But who is he, uprisen, with eye so keen,
In garb of shining plush of grassy green—
Dogs climbing round him, eager for the start,
With ceaseless tail, and doubly beating heart?
A stranger, who from distant forests came,
The sturdy keeper of the Oakly game.
Short prelude made, he pointed o'er the hill,
And raised a voice that every ear might fill;
His heart was in his theme, and in the forest still.

THE FORESTER.

Born in a dark wood's lonely dell,
Where echoes roar'd, and tendrils curl'd
Round a low cot, like hermit's cell,
Old Salcey Forest was my world.
I felt no bonds, no shackles then,
For life in freedom was begun;
I gloried in th' exploits of men,
And learn'd to lift my father's gun.

O what a joy it gave my heart!
Wild as a woodbine up I grew;
Soon in his feats I bore a part,
And counted all the game he slew.
I learn'd the wiles, the shifts, the calls,
The language of each living thing;
I mark'd the hawk that darting falls,
Or station'd spreads the trembling wing,

I mark'd the owl that silent flits,
The hare that feeds at eventide,
The upright rabbit, when he sits
And mocks you, ere he deigns to hide.
I heard the fox bark through the night,
I saw the rooks depart at morn,
I saw the wild deer dancing light,
And heard the hunter's cheering horn.

Mad with delight, I roam'd around
From morn to eve throughout the year,
But still, 'midst all I sought or found,
My favourites were the spotted deer.
The elegant, the branching brow,
The doe's clean limbs and eyes of love;
The fawn as white as mountain snow,
That glanced through fern and brier and grove.

One dark, autumnal, stormy day,
The gale was up in all its might,
The roaring forest felt its sway,
And clouds were scudding quick as light.
A ruthless crash, a hollow groan,
Aroused each self-preserving start,
The kine in herds, the hare alone,
And shagged colts that grazed apart.

'Midst fears instinctive, wonder drew
The boldest forward, gathering strength
As darkness lour'd, and whirlwinds blew,
To where the ruin stretch'd his length.
The shadowing oak, the noblest stem
That graced the forest's ample bound,
Had cast to earth his diadem;
His fractured limbs had delved the ground.

He lay, and still to fancy groan'd;
He lay like Alfred when he died—
Alfred, a king by Heaven enthroned,
His age's wonder, England's pride!
Monarch of forests, great as good,
Wise as the sage,—thou heart of steel!
Thy name shall rouse the patriot's blood
As long as England's sons can feel.

From every lawn, and copse, and glade,
The timid deer in squadrons came,
And circled round their fallen shade
With all of language but its name.
Astonishment and dread withheld
The fawn and doe of tender years;
But soon a triple circle swell'd,
With rattling horns and twinkling ears.

Some in his root's deep cavern housed,
And seem'd to learn, and muse, and teach,
Or on his topmost foliage browsed,
That had for centuries mock'd their reach.
Winds in their wrath these limbs could crash,
This strength, this symmetry could mar:
A people's wrath can monarchs dash
From bigot throne or purple car.

When Fate's dread bolt in Clermont's bowers
Provoked its million tears and sighs,
A nation wept its fallen flowers,
Its blighted hopes, its darling prize.—
So mourn'd my antler'd friends a while,
So dark, so dread, the fateful day;
So mourn'd the herd that knew no guile,
Then turn'd disconsolate away!

Who then of language will be proud?
Who arrogate that gift of Heaven?
To wild herds when they bellow loud,
To all the forest-tribes 'tis given.
I've heard a note from dale or hill
That lifted every head and eye;
I've heard a scream aloft so shrill
That terror seized on all that fly.

Empires may fall, and nations groan,
Pride be thrown down, and power decay;
Dark bigotry may rear her throne,
But science is the light of day.
Yet, while so low my lot is cast,
Through wilds and forests let me range:
My joys shall pomp and power outlast—
The voice of Nature cannot change.

A soberer feeling through the crowd he flung,
Clermont was uppermost on every tongue;
But who can live on unavailing sighs?
The inconsolable are not the wise.
Spirit, and youth, and worth demand a tear—
That day was past, and sorrow was not here;
Sorrow the contest dared not but refuse
'Gainst Oakly's open cellar and the muse.
Sir Ambrose cast his eye along the line,
Where many a cheerful face began to shine,
And, fixing on his man, cried, loud and clear,
"What have you brought, John Armstrong? let us hear."
Forth stepp'd his shepherd;—scanty locks of grey
Edged round a hat that seem'd to mock decay;
Its loops, its bands, were from the purest fleece,
Spun on the hills in silence and in peace.
A staff he bore carved round with birds and flowers,
The hieroglyphics of his leisure hours;
And rough-formed animals of various name,
Not just like Bewick's, but they meant the same.
Nor these alone his whole attention drew,
He was a poet,—this Sir Ambrose knew,—
A strange one too;—and now had penn'd a lay,
Harmless and wild, and fitting for the day.
No tragic tale on stilts;—his mind had more
Of boundless frolic than of serious lore;—
Down went his hat, his shaggy friend close by
Dozed on the grass, yet watch'd his master's eye.

THE SHEPHERD'S DREAM;

OR,

FAIRIES' MASQUERADE.

I HAD folded my flock, and my heart was o'erflowing,
I loiter'd beside the small lake on the heath;
The red sun, though down, left his drapery glowing,
And no sound was stirring, I heard not a breath:
I sat on the turf, but I meant not to sleep,
And gazed o'er that lake which for ever is new,
Where clouds over clouds appear'd anxious to peep
From this bright double sky with its pearl and its blue.

Forgetfulness, rather than slumber, it seem'd,
When in infinite thousands the fairies arose
All over the heath, and their tiny crests gleam'd
In mock'ry of soldiers, our friends and our foes.
There a stripling went forth, half a finger's length high,
And led a huge host to the north with a dash;
Silver birds upon poles went before their wild cry,
While the monarch look'd forward, adjusting his sash.
Soon after a terrible bonfire was seen,
The dwellings of fairies went down in their ire,
But from all I remember, I never could glean
Why the woodstack was burnt, or who set it on fire.
The flames seem'd to rise o'er a deluge of snow,
That buried its thousands,—the rest ran away;
For the hero had here overstrain'd his long bow,
Yet he honestly own'd the mishap of the day.
Then the fays of the north like a hailstorm came on,
And follow'd him down to the lake in a riot,
Where they found a large stone which they fix'd him upon,
And threaten'd, and coax'd him, and bade him be quiet.
He that conquer'd them all, was to conquer no more,
But the million beheld he could conquer alone;
After resting a while, he leap'd boldly on shore,
When away ran a fay that had mounted his throne.

'Twas pleasant to see how they stared, how they scamper'd,
By furze-bush, by fern, by no obstacle stay'd,
And the few that held council were terribly hamper'd,
For some were vindictive, and some were afraid.
I saw they were dress'd for a masquerade train,
Colour'd rags upon sticks they all brandish'd in view,
And of such idle things they seem'd mightily vain,
Though they nothing display'd but a bird split in two.
Then out rush'd the stripling in battle array,
And both sides determined to fight and to maul:
Death rattled his jawbones to see such a fray,
And Glory personified laugh'd at them all.
Here he fail'd,—hence he fled, with a few for his sake,
And leap'd into a cockle-shell floating hard by;
It sail'd to an isle in the midst of the lake,
Where they mock'd fallen greatness, and left him to die.

Meanwhile the north fairies stood round in a ring,
Supporting his rival on guns and on spears,
Who, though not a soldier, was robed like a king;
Yet some were exulting, and some were in tears.

A lily triumphantly floated above,
The crowd press'd, and wrangling was heard through the whole;
Some soldiers look'd surly, some citizens strove
To hoist the old nightcap on liberty's pole.
But methought in my dream some bewail'd him that fell,
And liked not his victors so gallant, so clever,
Till a fairy stepp'd forward, and blew through a shell,
"Bear misfortune with firmness, you'll triumph for ever."
I woke at the sound, all in silence, alone,
The moor-hens were floating like specks on a glass,
The dun clouds were spreading, the vision was gone,
And my dog scamper'd round 'midst the dew on the grass.

I took up my staff, as a knight would his lance,
And said, "Here's my sceptre, my baton, my spear,
And there's my prime minister far in advance,
Who serves me with truth for his food by the year."
So I slept without care till the dawning of day,
Then trimm'd up my woodbines and whistled amain;
My minister heard as he bounded away,
And we led forth our sheep to their pastures again.

Scorch'd by the shadeless sun on Indian plains,
Mellow'd by age, by wants, and toils, and pains,
Those toils still lengthen'd when he reach'd that shore,
Where Spain's bright mountains heard the cannons roar,
A pension'd veteran, doom'd no more to roam,
With glowing heart thus sung the joys of home.

THE SOLDIER'S HOME.

My untried muse shall no high tone assume,
Nor strut in arms;—farewell my cap and plume:
Brief be my verse, a task within my power,
I tell my feelings in one happy hour.
But what an hour was that! when from the main
I reach'd this lovely valley once again!
A glorious harvest fill'd my eager sight,
Half shock'd, half waving in a flood of light;
On that poor cottage roof where I was born
The sun look'd down as in life's early morn.

I gazed around, but not a soul appear'd,
I listen'd on the threshold, nothing heard;
I call'd my father thrice, but no one came;
It was not fear or grief that shook my frame,
But an o'erpowering sense of peace and home,
Of toils gone by, perhaps of joys to come.
The door invitingly stood open wide,
I shook my dust, and set my staff aside.
How sweet it was to breathe that cooler air,
And take possession of my father's chair!
Beneath my elbow, on the solid frame,
Appear'd the rough initials of my name,
Cut forty years before!—the same old clock
Struck the same bell, and gave my heart a shock
I never can forget. A short breeze sprung,
And while a sigh was trembling on my tongue,
Caught the old dangling almanacks behind,
And up they flew, like banners in the wind;
Then gently, singly, down, down, down they went,
And told of twenty years that I had spent
Far from my native land. That instant came
A robin on the threshold; though so tame,
At first he look'd distrustful, almost shy,
And cast on me his coal-black, steadfast eye,
And seem'd to say (past friendship to renew),
"Ah ha! old worn-out soldier, is it you?"
Through the room ranged the imprison'd humble bee,
And bomb'd, and bounced, and struggled to be free,
Dashing against the panes with sullen roar,
That threw their diamond sunlight on the floor;
That floor, clean sanded, where my fancy stray'd
O'er undulating waves the broom had made,
Reminding me of those of hideous forms
That met us as we pass'd the Cape of Storms,
Where high and loud they break, and peace comes never;
They roll and foam, and roll and foam for ever.
But *here* was peace, that peace which home can yield;
The grasshopper, the partridge in the field,
And ticking clock, were all at once become
The substitutes for clarion, fife, and drum.
While thus I mused, still gazing, gazing still,
On beds of moss that spread the window-sill,
I deem'd no moss my eyes had ever seen
Had been so lovely, brilliant, fresh, and green,

And guess'd some infant hand had placed it there,
And prized its hue, so exquisite, so rare.
Feelings on feelings mingling, doubling rose,
My heart felt everything but calm repose;
I could not reckon minutes, hours, nor years,
But rose at once, and bursted into tears;
Then, like a fool, confused, sat down again,
And thought upon the past with shame and pain;
I raved at war and all its horrid cost,
And glory's quagmire, where the brave are lost.
On carnage, fire, and plunder, long I mused,
And cursed the murdering weapons I had used.

Two shadows then I saw, two voices heard,
One bespoke age, and one a child's appeared.—
In stepp'd my father with convulsive start,
And in an instant clasp'd me to his heart.
Close by him stood a little blue-eyed maid,
And, stooping to the child, the old man said,
"Come hither, Nancy, kiss me once again;
This is your uncle Charles, come home from Spain."
The child approach'd, and with her fingers light
Stroked my old eyes, almost deprived of sight.—
But why thus spin my tale, thus tedious be?
Happy old Soldier! what's the world to me?

Change is essential to the youthful heart,
It cannot bound, it cannot act its part
To one monotonous delight a slave;
E'en the proud poet's lines become its grave:
By innate buoyancy, by passion led,
It acts instinctively, it will be fed.
A troop of country lasses paced the green,
Tired of their seats, and anxious to be seen;
They pass'd Sir Ambrose, turn'd, and pass'd again,
Some lightly tripp'd, to make their meaning plain:
The old man knew it well, the thoughts of youth
Came o'er his mind like consciousness of truth,
Or like a sunbeam through a lowering sky,
It gave him youth again, and ecstasy;
He joy'd to see them in this favourite spot,
Who of fourscore, or fifty score, would not?
He wink'd, he nodded, and then raised his hand,—
'Twas seen and answer'd by the Oakly band.
Forth leap'd the light of heart and light of heel,

E'en stiff-limb'd age the kindling joy could feel.
They form'd, while yet the music started light;
The grass beneath their feet was short and bright,
Where thirty couple danced with all their might.
The Forester caught lasses one by one,
And twirl'd his glossy green against the sun;
The Shepherd threw his doublet on the ground,
And clapp'd his hands, and many a partner found:
His hat-loops bursted in the jocund fray,
And floated o'er his head like blooming May.
Behind his heels his dog was barking loud,
And threading all the mazes of the crowd;
And had he boasted one had wagg'd his tale,
And plainly said, "What can my master ail?"
To which the Shepherd, had he been more cool,
Had only said, "'Tis Oakly feast, you fool."

But where was Philip, he who danced so well?
Had he retired, had pleasure broke her spell?
No, he had yielded to a tenderer bond,
He sat beside his own sick Rosamond,
Whose illness long deferred their wedding hour;
She wept, and seem'd a lily in a shower;
She wept to see him 'midst a crowd so gay,
For her sake lose the honours of the day.
But could a gentle youth be so unkind?
Would Philip dance, and leave his girl behind?
She in her bosom hid a written prize,
Inestimably rich in Philip's eyes;
The warm effusion of a heart that glow'd
With joy, with love, and hope by Heaven bestow'd.
He woo'd, he soothed, and every art essay'd,
To hush the scruples of the bashful maid,
Drawing, at length, against her weak command,
Reluctantly the treasure from her hand;
And would have read, but passion chain'd his tongue,
He turn'd aside, and down the ballad flung;
And paused so long from feeling and from shame,
That old Sir Ambrose halloo'd him by name:
"Bring it to me, my lad, and never fear,
I never blamed true love, or scorn'd a tear;
They well become us, e'en where branded most."
He came, and made a proxy of his host,
Who, as the dancers cooling join'd the throng,
Eyed the fair writer as he read her song.

ROSAMOND'S SONG OF HOPE.

SWEET Hope, so oft my childhood's friend,
I will believe thee still,
For thou canst joy with sorrow blend,
Where grief alone would kill.

When disappointments wrung my heart,
Ill brook'd in tender years,
Thou, like a sun, perform'dst thy part,
And dried my infant tears.

When late I wore the bloom of health,
And love had bound me fast,
My buoyant heart would sigh by stealth,
For fear it might not last.

My sickness came, my bloom decay'd,
But Philip still was by;
Aud thou, sweet Hope, so kindly said,
"He'll weep if thou shouldst die."

Thou told'st me too, that genial Spring
Would bring me health again;
I feel its power, but cannot sing
Its glories yet for pain.

But thou canst still my heart inspire,
And Heaven can strength renew;
I feel thy presence, holy fire!
My Philip will be true.

All eyes were turn'd, all hearts with pity glow'd,
The maid stood trembling, and the lover bow'd
As rose around them, while she dried her tears,
"Long life to Rosamond, and happy years!"

Scarce had the voices ceased, when forth there came
Another candidate for village fame:
By gratitude to Heaven, by honest pride,
Impell'd to rise and cast his doubts aside,
A sturdy yeoman, button'd to the throat,
Faced the whole ring, and shook his leathern coat.
"I have a tale of private life to tell,
'Tis all of self and home, I know it well;

In love and honour's cause I would be strong.
Mine is a father's tale, perhaps too long,
For father's, when a duteous child's the theme,
Can talk a summer's sun down, and then dream
Of retrospective joys, with hearts that glow
With feelings such as parents only know."

ALFRED AND JENNET.

Yes, let me tell of Jennet, my last child;
In her the charms of all the rest ran wild,
And sprouted as they pleased. Still by my side,
I own she was my favourite, was my pride,
Since first she labour'd round my neck to twine,
Or clasp'd both little hands in one of mine:
And when the season broke, I've seen her bring
Lapfuls of flowers, and then the girl would sing
Whole songs, and halves, and bits, O, with such glee!
If playmates found a favourite, it was she.
Her lively spirit lifted her to joy;
To distance in the race a clumsy boy
Would raise the flush of conquest in her eye,
And all was dance, and laugh, and liberty.
Yet not hard-hearted, take me right, I beg,
The veriest romp that ever wagg'd a leg
Was Jennet; but when pity soothed her mind,
Prompt with her tears, and delicately kind.
The half-fledged nestling, rabbit, mouse, or dove,
By turns engaged her cares and infant love;
And many a one, at the last doubtful strife,
Warm'd in her bosom, started into life.

At thirteen she was all that Heaven could send,
My nurse, my faithful clerk, my lively friend;
Last at my pillow when I sunk to sleep,
First on my threshold soon as day could peep:
I heard her happy to her heart's desire,
With clanking pattens, and a roaring fire.
Then, having store of new-laid eggs to spare,
She fill'd her basket with the simple fare,
And weekly trudged (I think I see her still)
To sell them at yon house upon the hill.

Oft have I watch'd her as she stroll'd along,
Heard the gate bang, and heard her morning song;
And, as my warm ungovern'd feelings rose,
Said to myself, "Heaven bless her! there she goes."
Long would she tarry, and then dancing home,
Tell how the lady bade her oft'ner come,
And bade her talk and laugh without control;
For Jennet's voice was music to the soul,—
My tale shall prove it:—For there dwelt a son,
An only child, and where there is but one,
Indulgence like a mildew reigns, from whence
Mischief may follow if that child wants sense.
But Alfred was a youth of noble mind,
With ardent passions, and with taste refined;
All that could please still courted heart and hand,
Music, joy, peace, and wealth, at his command;
Wealth, which his widow'd mother deem'd his own;
Except the poor, she lived for him alone.
Yet would she weep by stealth when he was near,
But check'd all sighs to spare his wounded ear;
For from his cradle he had never seen
Soul-cheering sunbeams, or wild Nature's green.
But all life's blessings centre not in sight;
For Providence, that dealt him one long night,
Had given, in pity to the blooming boy,
Feelings more exquisitely tuned to joy.
Fond to excess was he of all that grew;
The morning blossom sprinkled o'er with dew,
Across his path, as if in playful freak,
Would dash his brow, and weep upon his cheek;
Each varying leaf that brush'd where'er he came,
Press'd to his rosy lip, he call'd by name;
He grasp'd the saplings, measured every bough,
Inhaled the fragrance that the spring months throw
Profusely round, till his young heart confess'd
That all was beauty, and himself was bless'd.
Yet when he traced the wide extended plain,
Or clear brook side, he felt a transient pain;
The keen regret of goodness, void of pride,
To think he could not roam without a guide.

Who, guess ye, knew these scenes of home delight
Better than Jennet, bless'd with health and sight?
Whene'er she came, he from his sports would slide,
And catch her wild laugh, listening by her side;

Mount to the tell-tale clock with ardent spring,
And *feel* the passing hour, then fondly cling
To Jennet's arm, and tell how sweet the breath
Of bright May mornings on the open heath;
Then off they started, rambling far and wide,
Like Cupid with a wood-nymph by his side.

Thus months and months roll'd on, the summer pass'd,
And the long darkness, and the winter blast,
Sever'd the pair; no flowery fields to roam,
Poor Alfred sought his music and his home.
What wonder, then, if inwardly he pined?
The anxious mother mark'd her stripling's mind
Gloomy and sad, yet striving to be gay
As the long tedious evenings pass'd away:
'Twas her delight fresh spirits to supply.—
My girl was sent for—just for company.

A tender governess my daughter found,
Her temper placid, her instruction sound;
Plain were her precepts, full of strength, their power
Was founded on the practice of the hour:
Theirs were the happy nights to peace resign'd,
With ample means to cheer th' unbended mind;
The Sacred History, or the volumes fraught
With tenderest sympathy, or towering thought,
The laughter-stirring tale, the moral lay,
All that brings dawning reason into day.
There Jennet learn'd by maps, through every land
To travel, and to name them at command;
Would tell how great their strength, their bounds how far,
And show where uncle Charles was in the war.
The globe she managed with a timid hand,
Told which was ocean, which was solid land,
And said, whate'er their diff'rent climates bore,
All still roll'd round, though that I knew before.

Thus grown familiar, and at perfect ease,
What could be Jennet's duty but to please?
Yet hitherto she kept, scarce knowing why,
One powerful charm reserved, and still was shy.
When Alfred from his grand-piano drew
Those heavenly sounds that seem'd for ever new,
She sat as if to sing would be a crime,
And only gazed with joy, and nodded time.

Till one snug evening,—I myself was there,—
The whispering lad inquired, behind my chair,
"Bowman, can Jennet sing?" "At home," said I,
"She sings from morn till night, and seems to fly
From tune to tune, the sad, the wild, the merry,
And moulds her lip to suit them like a cherry;
She learn'd them here."—"O ho!" said he, "O ho!"
And rubb'd his hands, and stroked his forehead, so.
Then down he sat, sought out a tender strain,
Sung the first words, then struck the chords again:
"Come, Jennet, help me, you *must* know this song
Which I have sung, and you have heard so long."
I mark'd the palpitation of her heart,
Yet she complied, and strove to take a part,
But faint and fluttering, swelling by degrees,
Ere self-composure gave that perfect ease,
The soul of song:—then, with triumphant glee,
Resting her idle work upon her knee,
Her little tongue soon fill'd the room around
With such a voluble and magic sound,
That, spite of all her pains to persevere,
She stopp'd to sigh, and wipe a starting tear;
Then roused herself for faults to make amends,
While Alfred trembled to his fingers' ends.
But when this storm of feeling sunk to rest,
Jennet, resuming, sung her very best,
And on the ear, with many a dying fall,
She pour'd th' enchanting "Harp of Tara's Hall."
Still Alfred hid his raptures from her view,
Still touch'd the keys, those raptures to renew,
And led her on to that sweet past'ral air,
"The Highland Laddie with the yellow hair."
She caught the sound, and with the utmost ease
Bade Nature's music triumph, sure to please:
Such truth, such warmth, such tenderness express'd,
That my old heart was dancing in my breast.
Upsprung the youth, "O Jennet, where's your hand?
There's not another girl in all the land,
If she could bring me empires, bring me sight,
Could give me such unspeakable delight:
You little baggage! not to tell before
That you could sing; mind—you go home no more!"

Thus I have seen her from my own fireside
Attain the utmost summit of her pride;

For, from that singing hour, as time roll'd round,
At the great house my Jennet might be found,
And, while I watch'd her progress with delight,
She had a father's blessing every night,
And grew in knowledge at that moral school,
Till I began to guess myself a fool.
Music; why she could play as well as he!
At least I thought so,—but we'll let that be:
She read the poets, grave and light, by turns,
And talk'd of Cowper's "Task," and Robin Burns;
Nay, read without a book, as I may say,
As much as some could with in half a day.
'Twas thus I found they pass'd their happy time,
In all their walks, when Nature in her prime
Spread forth her scents and hues, and whisper'd love
And joy to every bird in every grove;
And though their colours could not meet his eye,
She pluck'd him flowers, then talk'd of poetry.

Once on a sunbright morning, 'twas in June,
I felt my spirits and my hopes in tune,
And idly rambled forth, as if t' explore
The little valley just before my door.
Down by yon dark-green oak I found a seat
Beneath the clustering thorns, a snug retreat
For poets, as I deem'd, who often prize
Such holes and corners far from human eyes;
I mark'd young Alfred, led by Jennet, stray
Just to the spot, both chatting on their way:
They came behind me, I was still unseen;
He was the elder, Jennet was sixteen.
My heart misgave me, lest I should be deem'd
A prying listener, never much esteem'd;
But this fear soon subsided, and I said,
"I'll hear this blind lad and my little maid."
That instant down she pluck'd a woodbine wreath,
The loose leaves rattled on my head beneath;
This was for Alfred, which he seized with joy,
"O, thank you, Jennet," said the generous boy.
Much was their talk, which many a theme supplied,
As down they sat, for every blade was dried.
I would have skulk'd away, but dare not move,
"Besides," thought I, "they will not talk of love;"
But I was wrong, for Alfred, with a sigh,
A little tremulous, a little shy,

But with the tenderest accents, ask'd his guide
A question which might touch both love and pride.
"This morning, Jennet, why did you delay,
And talk to that strange clown upon your way,
Our homespun gardener? how can you bear
His screech-owl tones upon your perfect ear?
I cannot like that man, yet know not why,
He's surely quite as old again as I;
He's ignorant, and cannot be your choice,
And ugly too, I'm certain, by his voice,—
Besides, he call'd you pretty."—"Well, what then?
I cannot hide my face from all the men;
Alfred, indeed, indeed, you are deceived,
He never spoke a word that I believed;
Nay, can he think that I would leave a home
Full of enjoyment, present and to come,
While your dear mother's favours daily prove
How sweet the bonds of gratitude and love?
No, while beneath her roof I shall remain,
I'll never vex you, never give you pain."
"Enough, my life!" he cried, and up they sprung;
By Heaven, I almost wish'd that I was young;
It was a dainty sight to see them pass,
Light as the July fawns upon the grass,
Pure as the breath of spring when forth it spreads,
Love in their hearts, and sunshine on their heads.

Next day I felt what I was bound to do,
To weigh the adventure well, and tell it too;
For Alfred's mother must not be beguiled,
He was her earthly hope, her only child;
I had no wish, no right to pass it by,
It might bring grief, perhaps calamity.
She was the judge, and she alone should know
Whether to check the flame or let it grow.
I went with fluttering heart, and moisten'd eye,
But strong in truth, and arm'd for her reply.
"Well, master Bowman, why that serious face?"
Exclaim'd the lovely dame, with such a grace,
That had I knelt before her, I had been
Not quite the simplest votary ever seen.
I told my tale, and urged that well-known truth,
That the soft passion in the bloom of youth
Starts into power, and leads th' unconscious heart
A chase where reason takes but little part;

Nothing was more in nature, or more pure,
And from their habits nothing was more sure.
Whether the lady blush'd from pride or joy,
I could but guess;—at length she said—"My boy
Dropp'd not a syllable of this to me!
What was I doing, that I could not see?
Through all the anxious hours that I have known,
His welfare still was dearer than my own;
How have I mourned o'er his unhappy fate!
Blind as he is! the heir to my estate!
I now might break his heart, and Jennet's too;
What must I, Bowman, or what can I do?"
"Do, madam?" said I, boldly; "if you trace
Impending degradation or disgrace
In this attachment, let us not delay;
Send my girl home, and check it while you may."
"I will," she said, but the next moment sigh'd;
Parental love was struggling hard with pride.

I left her thus, deep musing, and soon found
My daughter, for I traced her by the sound
Of Alfred's flageolet; no cares had they,
But in the garden bower spent half the day.
By starts he sung, then wildest trillings made,
To mock a piping blackbird in the glade.
I turn'd a corner and approach'd the pair;
My little rogue had roses in her hair!
She whipp'd them out, and with a downcast look,
Conquer'd a laugh by poring on her book.
My object was to talk with her aside,
But at the sight my resolution died;
They look'd so happy in their blameless glee,
That, as I found them, I e'en let them be;
Though Jennet promised a few social hours
'Midst her old friends, my poultry, and my flowers.
She came, but not till fatal news had wrung
Her heart through sleepless hours, and chain'd her tongue;
She came, but with a look that gave me pain,
For, though bright sunbeams sparkled after rain,
Though every brood came round, half run, half fly,
I knew her anguish by her alter'd eye,
And strove, with all my power, where'er she came,
To soothe her grief, yet gave it not a name.
At length a few sad bitter tears she shed,
And on both hands reclined her aching head.

'Twas then my time the conqueror to prove,
I summon'd all my rhetoric, all my love.
"Jennet, you must not think to pass through life
Without its sorrows, and without its strife;
Good, dutiful, and worthy as you are,
You must have griefs, and you must learn to bear."
Thus I went on, trite moral truths to string,—
All chaff, mere chaff, where Love has spread his wing:
She cared not, listen'd not, nor seem'd to know
What was my aim, but wiped her burning brow,
Where sat more eloquence and living power
Than language could embody in an hour.
With soften'd tone I mention'd Alfred's name,
His wealth, our poverty, and that sad blame
Which would have weigh'd me down, had I not told
The secret which I dare not keep for gold,
Of Alfred's love, o'erheard the other morn,
The gardener, and the woodbine, and the thorn;
And added, "Though the lady sends you home,
You are but young, child, and a day may come—"
"She has *not* sent me home," the girl replied,
And rose with sobs of passion from my side;
"She has *not* sent me home, dear father, no;
She gives me leave to tarry or to go;
She has not *blamed* me,—yet she weeps no less,
And every tear but adds to my distress:
I am the cause,—thus all that she has done
Will bring the death or misery of her son.
Jealous he might be, could he but have seen
How other lads approach'd where I have been;
But this man's voice offends his very soul,
That strange antipathy brooks no control;
And should I leave him now, or seem unkind,
The thought would surely wreck his noble mind;
To leave him thus, and in his utmost need!
Poor Alfred! then you will be blind indeed!
I will not leave him."—"Nay, child, do not rave;
What! would you be his menial, be his slave?"
"Yes," she exclaim'd, and wiped each streaming eye,
Yes, be his slave, and serve him till I die;
He is too just to act the tyrant's part,
He's truth itself" Oh, how my burden'd heart
Sigh'd for relief!—soon that relief was found;
Without one word we traced the meadow round,

Her feverish hand in mine, and weigh'd the case,
Nor dared to look each other in the face;
Till, with a sudden stop, as if from fear
I roused her sinking spirit, "Who comes here?"
Down the green slope before us, glowing warm,
Came Alfred, tugging at his mother's arm;
Willing she seem'd, but he still led the way,
She had not walk'd so fast for many a day;
His hand was lifted, and his brow was bare,
For now no clust'ring ringlets wanton'd there,
He threw them back in anger and in spleen,
And shouted "Jennet!" o'er the daisied green.
Boyish impatience strove with manly grace
In every line and feature of his face;
His claim appear'd resistless as his choice,
And when he caught the sound of Jennet's voice,
And when with spotless soul he clasp'd the maid,
My heart exulted while my breath was stay'd.
"Jennet, we must not part! return again;
What have I done to merit all this pain?
Dear mother, share my fortune with the poor,
Jennet is mine, and *shall* be—say no more;
Bowman, you know not what a friend I'll be;
Give me your daughter, Bowman, give her me;
Jennet, what will my days be if you go?
A dreary darkness, and a life of woe:
My dearest love, come *home*, and do not cry;
You are my daylight, Jennet, I shall die."
To such appeals all prompt replies are cold,
And stately prudence snaps her cobweb hold.
Had the good widow tried, or wish'd to speak,
This was a bond she could not, dared not break;
Their hearts (you never saw their likeness, never)
Were join'd, indissolubly join'd for ever.
Why need I tell how soon our tears were dried,
How Jennet blush'd, how Alfred, with a stride,
Bore off his prize, and fancied every charm,
And clipp'd against his ribs her trembling arm;
How mute we seniors stood, our power all gone!
Completely conquer'd, Love the day had won,
And the young vagrant triumph'd in our plight,
And shook his roguish plumes, and laugh'd outright.
Yet, by my life and hopes, I would not part
With this sweet recollection from my heart:

I would not now forget that tender scene
To wear a crown, or make my girl a queen.
Why need be told how pass'd the months along,
How sped the summer's walk, the winter's song,
How the foil'd suitor all his hopes gave up,
How Providence with rapture fill'd their cup?
No dark regrets, no tragic scenes to prove,
The gardener was too old to die for love.
A thousand incidents I cast aside
To tell but one—I gave away the bride—
Gave the dear youth what kings could not have given;
Then bless'd them both, and put my trust in Heaven.
There the old neighbours laugh'd the night away,
Who talk of Jennet's wedding to this day.
And could you but have seen the modest grace,
The half-hid smiles that play'd in Jennet's face,
Or mark'd the bridegroom's bounding heart o'erflow,
You might have wept for joy, as I could now:
I speak from memory of days long past;
Though 'tis a father's tale, I've done at last.

Here rest thee, rest thee, Muse, review the scene
Where thou with me from peep of dawn hast been.
We did not promise that this motley throng
Should every *one* supply a votive song,
Nor every tenant:—yet thou hast been kind,
For untold tales must still remain behind,
Which might o'er listening patience still prevail,
Did fancy waver not, nor daylight fail.
"The Soldier's Wife," her toils, his battles o'er,
"Love in a Shower," the riv'let's sudden roar;
Then, "Lines to Aggravation" form the close,
Parent of murders, and the worst of woes.
But while the changeful hours of daylight flew,
Some homeward look'd, and talk'd of evening dew;
Some watch'd the sun's decline, and stroll'd around,
Some wish'd another dance, and partners found;
When in an instant every eye was drawn
To one bright object on the upper lawn;
A fair procession from the mansion came,
Unknown its purport and unknown its aim.

No gazer could refrain, no tongue could cease,
It seem'd an embassy of love and peace.
Nearer and nearer still approach'd the train,
Age in the van transform'd to youth again.
Sir Ambrose gazed, and scarce believed his eyes;
'Twas magic, memory, love, and blank surprise;
For there his venerable lady wore
The very dress which, sixty years before,
Had sparkled on her sunshine bridal morn,
Had sparkled, ay, beneath this very thorn!
Her hair was snowy white, o'er which was seen,
Emblem of what her bridal cheeks had been,
A twin red rose—no other ornament
Had pride suggested, or false feeling lent;
She came to grace the triumph of her lord,
And pay him honours at his festive board.
Nine ruddy lasses follow'd where she stepp'd;
White were their virgin robes, that lightly swept
The downy grass; in every laughing eye
Cupid had skulk'd, and written "victory."
What heart on earth its homage could refuse?
Each tripp'd, unconsciously, a blushing Muse.
A slender chaplet of fresh blossoms bound
Their clustering ringlets in a magic round.
And, as they slowly moved across the green,
Each in her beauty seem'd a May-day queen.
The first a wreath bore in her outstretch'd hand,
The rest a single rose upon a wand;
Their steps were measured to that grassy throne,
Where, watching them, Sir Ambrose sat alone.
They stopp'd,—when she, the foremost of the row,
Curtsied, and placed the wreath upon his brow;
The rest in order, pacing by his bower,
In the loop'd wreath left each her single flower,—
Then stood aside.—What broke the scene's repose?
The whole assembly clapp'd their hands and rose.
The Muses charm'd them as they form'd a ring,
And look'd the very life and soul of Spring!
But still the white-hair'd dame they view'd with pride,
Her love so perfect, and her truth so tried.
Oh, sweet it is to hear, to see, to name,
Unquench'd affection in the palsied frame—
To think upon the boundless raptures past,
And love, triumphant, conquering to the last!

Silenced by feeling, vanquish'd by his tears,
The host sprung up, nor felt the weight of years;
Yet utterance found not, though in virtue's cause,
But acclamations fill'd up nature's pause,
Till, by one last and vigorous essay,
His tide of feeling roll'd itself away;
The language of delight its bondage broke,
And many a warm heart bless'd him as he spoke.

"Neighbours and friends, by long experience proved,
Pardon this weakness; I was too much moved:
My dame, you see, can youth and age insnare.
In vain I strove, 'twas more than I could bear,—
Yet hear me,—though the tyrant passions strive,
The words of truth, like leading stars, survive;
I thank you all, but will accomplish more—
Your verses shall not die as heretofore;
Your local tales shall not be thrown away,
Nor war remain the theme of every lay.
Ours is an humbler task, that may release
The high-wrought soul, and mould it into peace.
These pastoral notes some victor's ear may fill,
Breathed amidst blossoms, where the drum is still:
I purpose then to send them forth to try
The public patience, or its apathy.
The world shall see them; why should I refrain?
'Tis all the produce of my own domain.
Farewell!" he said, then took his lady's arm,
On his shrunk hand her starting tears fell warm;
Again he turn'd to view the happy crowd,
And cried, "Good night, good night, good night," aloud,
"Health to you all! for see, the evening closes,"
Then march'd to rest, beneath his crown of roses.
Happy old man! with feelings such as these,
The seasons all can charm, and trifles please.
An instantaneous shout re-echoed round,
'Twas wine and gratitude inspired the sound:
Some joyous souls resumed the dance again,
The aged loiter'd o'er the homeward plain,
And scatter'd lovers rambled through the park,
And breathed their vows of honour in the dark;
Others a festal harmony preferr'd,
Still round the thorn the jovial song was heard;

Dance, rhymes, and fame, they scorn'd such things as
these,
But drain'd the mouldy barrel to its lees,
As if 'twere worse than shame to want repose:
Nor was the lawn clear till the moon arose,
And on each turret pour'd a brilliant gleam
Of modest light, that trembled on the stream;
The owl awoke, but dared not yet complain,
And banish'd Silence reassumed her reign.

HAZELWOOD HALL:

A VILLAGE DRAMA.

IN THREE ACTS.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

THIS little dramatic sketch is not so new as it may appear to be. So long ago as the year 1805, a gentleman met me on the sands at Worthing, and asked me to his house, &c. but I never saw him afterwards. He gave his address, "Mr. Goldhawk, Hazelwood-Hall, Leith-Hill, Surrey." The names never left my mind, and I then thought of trying them in a village tale, or drama, which I actually began. The subject has slept ever since, until the publication of my "May Day," last spring, left me leisure and inclination to put it into its present form. I make no pretensions to a knowledge of the "dramatic unities," or of what is called "stage effect." It may be like twenty plays, which I have never seen. The characters are exclusively villagers, with the exception of *Jack Whirlwind;* through whom I have endeavoured to censure the horrible vice of seducing unguarded females, and then leaving them to scorn and misery.

If the more fastidious reader should by chance lay his hand on this trifle, and should object to the very name of play, or drama, such reader is assured that he will not find in it either an oath, a pun, or an inuendo. Whatever may be its fate, even if it should ultimately get upon the stage, and be subjected to what may be thought the necessary bolsters, stays, and clippings, and these should be actual improvements, I shall have nothing to do with them. It is very natural that, thus situated, I should wish to be answerable for nothing but what I here print:

And I remain the reader's

Humble servant,

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

SHEFFORD, BEDS,
April 12, 1823.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

CAPTAIN GOLDHAWK, *a retired Officer.*
DONALD MORRISON, *a Country Squire.*
SPOKEUM, *a Wheelwright.*
JOEL, *his Son.*
JOHN GOSLING, *Servant to Captain Goldhawk.*
JACK WHIRLWIND, *a Stranger.*

WOMEN.

LADY HAZELWOOD, *a Widow.*
EMMA, *her Daughter.*
MARY MAYTHORN, *an Orphan, brought up by Lady Hazelwood.*
JUDITH, *Housekeeper to Spokeum.*
BETTY, *Servant to Morrison.*

HAZELWOOD-HALL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Wheelwright's Yard—JOEL *at work.*

Enter SPOKEUM.

Spok. Joel, Joel, my boy; What ails you? I was going to ask you yesterday, only you looked so strangely, I thought it would be of no use.—Here's all our work running behind, sadly behind: here is Captain Goldhawk's cart should have gone home a fortnight ago, and—what's his name's wheelbarrow—

Joel. I can't help it, father. You do but little yourself; you are so taken up with your machine and your contrivances; which I doubt will end in nothing.

Spok. Whatever I am doing, Joel, I am not in love; but I have observed, that since you have been acquainted with your Mary, up at the Hall, you are always singing or sighing, reading or scribbling: you are quite an altered young man,

Joel. I hope you don't think me altered for the worse, father. If you do, I can't tell when I shall be better.

Spok. But could not you love her as other people love, that is, *reasonably?* for there is "reason in roasting of eggs," as my father used to say. But you will have your own way, I suppose.

Joel. Nay, don't say so, father. I remember the time when I pleased you long ago, by taking your advice. Don't you recollect when all the boys in the

parish planned how to rob Lady Hazelwood's orchard, and I would not go? And don't you remember you gave me a shilling—a whole shilling for myself, because I refused?

Spok. Yes, I recollect it; that was well done: but I don't ask you to forsake Mary Maythorn.

Joel. It would be of no use if you did.

Spok. Well, since you are so short with me, I will leave you and see after the brewing. I will send old Judith to you. [*Exit* SPOKEUM.

Joel. Well, you are a good old dad enough, but you are a queer one. Your machine, indeed!—A machine to pick hops! Hah! hah! hah! Now if courting a pretty girl has not as much sense in it as that, then I am no wheelwright, that's all.

Enter JUDITH.

Joel. Well, Judie, what's the matter with you? all in a fluster as usual,—what's the matter?

Jud. Why, your father has been so taken up lately with his cogs and wheels and contrivances, that he don't like, he says, to have his thoughts disturbed in this way.

Joel. No, nor I mine. I work my full hours, Judie, and do his work as well as my own; what does he want more?

Jud. Well, don't be angry, child. You know your father is rather obstinate and conceited; but I'll keep him quiet as well as I can, if you will follow your duty, and not let this Mary Maythorn turn your brain too much.

Joel. Ay, now you talk sense; I will follow my duty and my inclination too. But what do you think of our new neighbour, Captain Goldhawk?

Jud. Why, I think him a mighty kind, civil gentleman as ever came into a village; but I don't know what to make of his man, Gosling John, as you call

him: he has just passed by with Betty, the servant at Squire Morrison's.

Joel. That's all right; let him go any way he pleases, and I shall go to Hazelwood-Hall when I can, that you may depend upon. Come, come, see after the dumplings, and let me alone; my heart is all sunshine. [*Exit* JUDITH.

AIR.

Then why should the girl of my heart,
For whom all these raptures I feel,
Be rival'd by waggon or cart,
And slip through my hands like an eel?

I am young—so is she—and how fair!
Then love shall my moments employ:
I am caught by her berry-brown hair,
And the rose on her cheek is my joy!

SCENE II.

A tall Avenue, leading to Hazelwood-Hall, with a distant View of the Sea.

Enter CAPTAIN GOLDHAWK *and* SQUIRE MORRISON, *meeting.*

Mor. Well, my good neighbour, how do you do this fine morning? How do you like your new situation? Does it answer your expectation? Will it do? We have very few finer in this part of England, I assure you.

Gold. Do, squire—ay, to admiration! and I am so near my old play-fellow, the lady of the mansion there, that 's a comfort to a man of my quiet habits; for I

have done roving: I have seen enough of the world, and wish for peace here beside the forest, where I can walk without being jostled.

Mor. Yes, a fine country for musing, and for sporting, too; and that's what I practise most of the two: plenty of birds, captain, plenty of birds.

Gold. Oh! plenty of birds, out-door birds, and in-door birds; and sometimes it happens that one single bird is pursued with more pleasure than all the rest.

Mor. What do you mean, captain!

Gold. What, you don't know, I suppose? then your gun must be readier than your apprehension before you do much execution in the field. What say you to my neighbour's lovely daughter, ha? I am not blind, squire, I am not blind: she is, in truth, a charming creature!

Mor. Well, so she is then; for I scorn to boggle about a falsehood, when truth comes to my tongue's end without any trouble.

Gold. That's well said; give me your hand upon that. I think you will turn out to be one of my sort of fellows at last; but I have seen young men as sensible to the charms of a woman as you can possibly be, and yet their intentions were not honourable.

Mor. Oh! they must have been some of your army gentlemen; now I never was a soldier in my life, and never mean to be, unless my country should be in danger: my great-grandfather's sword is rusty.

Gold. I guess by your name, Donald Morrison, your family must have come from the North, is it not so? It has a twang of the Scotch in it.

Mor. You are right; my great-grandfather bought this estate; for the Scots are like many other birds of passage, they love to travel southward.

Gold. O don't talk of travelling, friend Donald, I have had my fill of it; my day is over.

AIR.

'Twas where the Indian billows roll,
And frightful lightnings spread dismay,
Where serpents twine, and tigers prowl,
My prime of manhood pass'd away!

Yet even there to fate resign'd
My heart would kindle to a flame,
At thoughts of one I left behind,
Left her to grief—but not to shame.

She's dead—and I, a childless man,
Seek solace in the field and grove;
And think on life—(how short the span!)
On blighted hopes and blighted love!

Hey ho, Morrison! these thoughts will arise, they will come in spite of me; yet I can carry a gun as well as you.

Mor. Use it, then; and some fine day, take a stroll with me into the forest, and shoot Care whenever you find him. But who comes here?

Gold. O! it's only my man, Gosling John: what can he want with me?

Enter JOHN.

Gos. Sir, I have been down to the post-office, but there be no letters for your honour.

Gold. Well, never mind.—Now go up to the hall here, and say that Captain Goldhawk and Squire Morrison will call upon the ladies, if it be agreeable. We'll follow you at leisure.

Gos. *Eese*, sir.

Gold. Eese, sir—What, can't you say *yes*?

Gos. *Eese*, sir.

Gold. Well, go along. Now, squire, you won't object to this morning visit, I dare say: we can prolong our talk as we go. [*Exit both.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in Hazelwood-Hall.

LADY H. *and her Daughter, with* MARY MAYTHORN *at work at a separate table.*

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. My Lady, Captain Goldhawk and Mr. Morrison desire to wait upon you, if it be agreeable.

Lady H. Very well. [*Exit Servant.*] Now this is kind of them; I like morning visits exceedingly; people are then, or ought to be, fresh from repose, and have all their faculties about them, like the new-risen day. What say you, my dear Mary? Is your head better since you rose?

Mary. A little, madam; but the pain always makes me stupid for some hours after it is gone.

Lady H. And what says Emma? you look the very picture of health. Has the promised visit any thing to do with it—Ha?

Emma. Indeed, mamma, I love the old captain as I could love a father, had I the happiness to have one: and as to Morrison, he is so frank and cheerful, if I did not respect him, I should be behind all the children in the parish; for everybody loves him. I never saw a boy run from him for fear of correction in my life, though sometimes they richly deserve it.

Lady H. Very cautious, my dear. Well, let it be *respect* then, and I can join in it with all my heart; but could not you two treat me with my favorite duet, 'Lovely Truth?" I shall never be tired of it—

Mary. O dear madam, it is impossible for me to sing; my voice would tremble so, that you would pity me:—another time, madam, another time, I will strive to oblige you—most willingly.

Emma. I have not that plea to urge; for when one excuses herself in a duet, the other is exonerated surely; besides, the gentlemen will be here directly; I saw them under the window.

Lady H. Well, I must relinquish the pleasure at present, and wish both in better trim. (*Aside.*) One fluttered in the head, and the other in the heart.

Enter CAPTAIN GOLDHAWK *and* SQUIRE MORRISON.

Gold. Good morning to you, ladies! we make very bold, you see; but if not agreeable, you can turn us out by a single frown; you have always the advantage of us there.

Lady H. I thank you, captain, for this friendly visit; it is what I always enjoy: I like to see people neighbourly.

Gold. But what is the matter with my little mild-faced Mary? she does not look well (*turning to her*) methinks. Have her dreams been disagreeable?

Mary. Not so, sir, but my waking has. I hope I shall be better to-morrow.

Gold. Right, my dear, let us live and hope; for without that we should be poor creatures indeed! But where is Morrison? does he think I am going to run the length of this room after him, before I can speak to his lady?

MORRISON *and* EMMA *advancing.*

Miss Hazelwood—Miss *Hygeia*, it would be mere compliment to ask after your health, your face tells tales; I'll warrant, you have had one of your six-o'clock rambles this morning.

Emma. Not quite so early, sir; but I have had a charming walk down to the edge of the forest, and have been talking to the boldest of the deer, that always meet me there: I have one little doe, which I have made as tame as a pet lamb. I cannot think how you

men can be so barbarous as to molest and injure such beautiful animals!

Mor. Nay, don't look at me so, my dear Emma; I never shot a buck in my life, I assure you.

Emma. That may be; but you are very happy with half a dozen dogs round you, a whistle in your whip-handle, a bugle in your belt, and a bag full of hares and pheasants.

Mor. Well, but, my life, would you make a Hindoo of me? must I believe in transmigration? why I should be terrified in aiming at a bird, for fear of shooting my own grandfather.

Gold. I once shot a tiger; but I had no tender lady by my side, either to applaud or rebuke me.

Emma. O dear, captain, pray don't call it a rebuke; I meant no harm, indeed I did not: but if rebuke it was, it would be perfectly useless; for field-sports to a country gentleman form an essential part of his existence; he would feel and look as ridiculous without a gun as without a hat.

Gold. Ah, you are a trimmer, Emma; but let us change the subject.—Pray when were you last in London? Don't you long to be there sometimes?

Emma. Never at this season, I assure you: you must speak to my mamma about that.

Lady H. Captain Goldhawk, I have been talking to Mary about going to London, and how she would like it, and she says she could not stir out of doors without a protector; and I have assured her, that enthusiast as she is after flowers, she would be sadly disappointed.

Gold. Ay, so you would, child; there is not a bed of violets to be found, if you search Cheapside from one end to the other—is there, Morrison?

Lady H. But talking of protectors in London, or anywhere else, I was always of opinion, that a woman of sense and virtue carries her own protection with her, if she chooses to call it into action—don't you think so, Emma? "Lovely Truth"—you understand me.

Emma. O perfectly, mamma; but I cannot sing it alone—Mr. Morrison must help me.

Mor. My dear Emma, if you say *must*, then I *must* indeed.

DUET.—MORRISON *and* EMMA.

Lovely Truth! thy steady eye
Can strike the villain's heart with shame,
When Modesty, thy firm ally,
Without a sword,
Without a word,
Her angel brow uprears!
Her single glance, when thou art by,
Is spear and shield—the foe must fly,
Or crouch to truth and modesty,
To woman's scorn or tears!

Mor. Good day, ladies; farewell, captain: we intend to take an hour's walk in the park.

[*Exeunt* MORRISON *and* EMMA.

Gold. You were talking, Molly, about protectors; why you are not without a worthy young man here, who appears perfectly able to protect you any where. Come, don't be so shy; I know something about him.

Mary. Well, but, dear sir, the person you allude to knows no more of London than myself; and, besides, he is not a gentleman to—

Gold. O, a London *gentleman* protector! bless your innocent heart! you know not what you are saying: yes, there are gentlemen protectors in abundance;—but thanks to the laws, the Bench and the Fleet prison have taken care of a great number of them; and I heartily wish that the gallows may take the rest.

Mary. Surely, sir, you are too severe now.

Gold. Not at all, child; who would hesitate about hanging a wolf? all the difference between us is, that I know something about them, and you nothing. Be a

good girl. Lady Hazelwood, I have spent a long morning with you; I must get into the woods to compose my spirits, so wish you good day. [*Exit.*

Lady H. When I lived in town, in dear Sir John's time, instances occurred of the most heartless, dishonourable and unmanly villany, such as would have disgraced a cannibal. The captain has just cause for his anger; and I wish London had not been mentioned.

Mary. Indeed, madam, so do I: I feel so safe and happy here, that I shall avoid the subject in future.

Lady H. But now they have left us alone, what say you to a turn in the shrubbery? the fresh air may benefit your poor head.

Mary. It certainly would, madam, and I should enjoy it of all things. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Avenue near the Hall—Moonlight.

JOEL *and* MARY MAYTHORN.

Joel. Now is not this delightful, Mary? to see the light trembling and dancing under our feet, and the moon herself running along beyond the branches? I was charmed with this spot before I was five years old, and what must my feelings be *now*, when I have *you* by my side?

Mary. It is indeed quiet, serene, and beautiful, and I can compare it to nothing better than a good conscience.

Joel. And then to think that the very turf on which you now tread will, in the turn of a season, be yellow with cowslips—and then the birds, Molly!

Mary. Indeed, that is a most heart-stirring delicious season: what a pity it is so soon over!

Joel. I wish I could talk, my dear Mary—I wish I could talk to you as the gentlemen do, all in fine language and hard words, it would sound so prettily, especially by moonlight; but I cannot do it, Mary, you know I cannot.

Mary. Well, I am sure, Joel, I never wished you could; for I really think you will talk well enough for anybody whilst you speak truth.

Joel. Bless you for that! I have been hard at work all day, that is one satisfaction, and I am glad the night is come. How the gentlemen and ladies have spent the time, I know not; but I think Squire Morrison ought to be happy with the Lady Emma.

Mary. O Joel, you know not half the worth of that excellent creature. If I was her own sister, instead of being what I am—a poor orphan, she could not treat me with more kindness.

Joel. Then Squire Morrison is the very man I would select for her out of ten thousand.

Mary. Here is somebody coming up the cross-path! Who can it be?

Joel. Oh! I know her by her gait; it is Betty, Squire Morrison's servant: let us not avoid her.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Your servant—Miss Maythorn, Mr. Spokeum—your servant; I hope I don't intrude upon you; I have been on an errand down to the captain's and took this pleasant way back, across the grounds.

Joel. What, and all alone, Betty? What, was not John at home?

Betty. What's that to you, Mr. Saucebox? Mind your own business. A body can't stir out of a night without meeting somebody to insult one.

Joel. I did not mean to affront you, Betty: don't be in a passion.

Betty. Ay, but I won't stay, though; I am in a hurry: Good night, Miss Maythorn. [*Exit* BETTY.

Mary. I don't like this, Joel; it shows a want of feeling to pounce thus upon the girl when she has nobody with her. What do you know of her?

Joel. O very little indeed; I have seen her often on the green: she is a good, kind-hearted, silly girl enough; but she would not let me kiss her though—(*aside.*) Ah! my foolish blab-tongue—there was a look!

Mary. That is nothing against her, however: What makes you call her silly? perhaps I can find one or two in the parish as silly as she. What think you of Gosling John making the same offer?

Joel. What he! What, Gosling John! He dare not for his life; I would break every bone in his skin.

Mary. And even Squire Morrison has looked at me at times in a manner which I thought I ought not to understand.

Joel. You must be mistaken, Molly; you certainly must be mistaken; they—they dare not.

Mary. Oh! as to daring, Joel, you men often dare things which do not become you: for instance—a young man lately attempted to kiss a young woman with whom he had no business, and then, to crown all, told his chosen one (of all people) what a rebuff he had met with.

Joel. Oh! botheration—let's see—what shall I say next? (*aside*)—Hem!—Well, but Molly, I say, when half a dozen village girls, giggling and romping, get round one, what is one to do with them? What can one do with them, that's all!

Mary. I'll tell you in your own language. When such a thing happens, just let them alone, that's all!

Joel. Well, if you won't be angry any longer, drown me for a puppy, if ever I kiss one of them again. There, will that satisfy you?

Mary. I am not hard-hearted, Joel, but you are very foolish.

Joel. Well, I always thought I was a little so; we

won't differ about that. I'll sing you a song presently, and make it all up again, if you will say that you will forgive me in your heart.

Mary. With all my heart then; there, will that do?

SONG.

Joel. Though when youthful blood is flowing
Every female bears a charm,
Still for *one* the bosom's glowing,
One alone the heart can warm.

Mary. Tenderness and honour blending,
Lead to joy and point the way;
Hope still proves, her visions lending,
True or false, that life's a day!

Both. Let us then, through wind and weather,
Dare the storms of life to try,
Hand and heart thus link'd together,
Cloud or sunshine, till we die!

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Entrance to a dark Forest.

Emma. How impressive is this deep and solemn silence!—Even my own breath is audible! and the distant low of my white heifer has music in it to a mind thus calm, and in such a place.—Methinks these lonely walks of mine have something of the romantic in them.—I wish I could hear a human voice, or even the bark of a dog, to remind me that I am still in the habitable world.

AIR.

Peep from thy covert, noble antler'd stag,
Nor fear me.
List'ning hare, enjoy thy food,
I spread no snare for thee.
Sing, lovely Philomel,
Midst the shady branches near me;
Till my wandering lover comes,
O tune thy lay to me.
Hark! from the deep dell,
The mingled voices swelling.
Hark! what sweet echoes
Are through the forest borne!
Welcome, thou brave youth;
Welcome sounds of rapture telling
Charming echoes.
Here he comes;
'Twas Donald's bugle horn.

Enter MORRISON, *in a Hunter's Garb, with a Bugle.*

Mor. Ha! my sweet spirit of the woods, my Diana, how kind is this, to be the first object of my sight, when I thus revisit the sunshine!

Emma. There now was a fine burst of natural feeling, spoilt by the introduction of what you call *classical knowledge*, which boys learn at school—old heathenish nonsense. Such tales were not invented or written for people of this country—I am glad to see you, however.

Mor. Well, my dear Emma, if you don't like Diana, will you be Hebe, the beautiful Hebe?

Emma. No, nor Hebe neither—when my mother takes an airing, she does not require me to harness the peacocks to her carriage; besides, Hebe was a cup-bearer, and I am afraid I feel a little too independent for that.

Mor. Well, then, your name shall be plain Miss Hazelwood, till I can persuade you out of it at some happier moment.

Emma. But really, don't you think me very bold to ramble out thus alone in such a solitude?

Mor. O yes, certainly, as bold as a huntress.

Emma. Nay, there you are getting into the old track again—I tell you I won't be a huntress—but, as I live, here comes my mamma! What can have brought her out?—She is just coming down the hill, to look after my safety, I'll warrant.

Mor. O, as to safety, what says the old song about walking in a wood?

"There's no one but Cupid, I assure you, comes there,
And Cupid's an urchin you surely can't fear."

Emma. More heathenism!

Mor. Why this is the most fashionable and modern heathenism I know of, and if you scold ever so, you are

not likely to set it aside. What could the Valentine writers do without a bundle of darts, and a little boy with wings?

Emma. It is poor idle stuff for all that.

Mor. The personifications are idle enough, I allow, but the subject is as new and unaltered as it was at the first creation of the world—but your mother is here.

Enter LADY HAZELWOOD.

All hail! most noble duchess of Hazelwood! So you were not willing to let us have all the morning air to ourselves?

Emma. Why, dear mamma, I suppose you thought I should be lost if you did not look after me.

Lady H. No, child—but I sat at home till my thoughts grew too powerful for me, not on your account, but somehow I was low-spirited.

Mor. Then you have taken the wisest way in the world to give them a contrary turn, for "there is a spirit in the woods." I have been telling Emma so, but she would not hear a word about the matter.

Emma. That was because you called *me* the spirit of the woods. I know there is an intensity of feeling—a kind of awe, in such a scene, which is indescribable, and, therefore, I will not attempt it.

Lady H. As I came along, it occurred to my mind that there is a very perfect echo to be heard near this entrance of the forest.—Mr. Morrison, perhaps you know the spot?

Mor. O yes, madam, I know it perfectly, know it to a foot; for this Miss Echo, this wood nymph, is as fanciful as the best of them; but hold—I am in danger of heathenism again. In plain English then, all the oaks you see in that direction, for a compass of three miles, call me master; and you shall hear them acknowledge it;—a little this way, ladies.

AIR.

Oaks that droop your branches low,
With silver moss on every bough;
For whom do all your honours grow?
Your master, who but Donald?
(*Echo*) Donald.

When beneath your sacred shade
Blooming Emma trips the glade,
Who shall claim the bonny maid?
Who but happy Donald?
(*Echo*) Happy Donald.

Emma. Upon my word, Mr. Morrison, yours are the most obedient oaks I ever heard of; you make them say just what you please.

Mor. Ay, my love, and the most consistent too; for if you put the quesion fifty times, they will give you the same answer—they beat the oaks of ——

Emma. Pshaw; let us hear nothing of Dodona, and the oracle—I know what you mean; let us prove the truth of your own oracle first.

Mor. Well, be it so; and let us be gone, for I perceive your mother is impatient.

Lady H. I hope we shall all dine together—the captain will join us, and I wish to make a friendly party without interruption—but Spokeum crossed my path hither in his way down to the captain's, and I thought he looked unusually serious.

Mor. Possibly he has a bill to present, and that, you know, is always a serious matter. But Goldhawk would rather pay him beforehand than make him wait.—Come along.

[*Exit, singing,* "When beneath your sacred shade.'

SCENE II.

The Outside of Captain GOLDHAWK'S *House—a natural Cascade beside the Lawn.*

Gold. Well, here I muse away my hours sometimes very agreeably, something like a hermit; but I find that the pleasures of a hermit's life had their foundation in the brain of some moon-struck poet or other, who lived nobody knows when. I know from experience that it will not do without a mixture of sociability; for the oftener my neighbours call, the better I like it.——John!

Gosling. Coming, sir.

Enter JOHN.

Gold. Did not Mr. Morrison say he would call on me this afternoon?

Gos. Ay, your honour, that he did, and here he is at the very door.

Enter MORRISON.

Mor. Your servant, captain—don't let me disturb your privy council.

Gold. O there is nothing private about the matter—(don't go away, John)—I want a few words with this honest simpleton, nothing more.—John, did you not once tell me that your father sold a little freehold?

Gos. Eese, sir.

Gold. What, you have not left that *eese* off yet?

Gos. Indeed, your honour, I have been trying hard at it for this fortnight; I think I mend a little, and if I can't conquer, I must say *ay* all the rest of my life.

Gold. Well, but your father sold the place?

Gos. He did so, sir; he was poor and in distress: but the lawyers and the purchasers kept him out of his

money nearly seven years, and I believe he never got it all at last.

Mor. John, this must be inquired into; I will bear it in mind.

Gold. But how came you by your nickname? why do they call you *Gosling* John?

Gos. Why, as thus, sir: I had a fancy to look over the county list of freeholders, to find my father's name —the name could not be found. I then looked for Duck Bottom, which is the name of the place—I could not find that. I then found out that the names were all written the *backward wayses*, and that I must look for G; and there, sure enough, I found "*Gosling, John, of Duck Bottom.*"

Gold. O, the name *was* there then?

Gos. Ay, the name was there after a fashion; and so because I had never seen that way of writing before, and made a kind of talk about it amongst my neighbours, they have called me Gosling John ever since.

Mor. Never mind a nickname, John, if it carries no disgrace with it.

Gos. Why, that's just what I have been thinking, sir. There's the old man, who is now coming up the path, has a nickname as well as I; they call him *Old Hops*, but I never could find why, or what they meant by it, for he is no more lame than I am.

[*Exit* JOHN.

Enter SPOKEUM.

Gold. Well, master Spokeum, what's your business?

Spok. I hope it won't offend your honour, but being rather short of cash, I have brought a small bill.

Gold. Well, see that you are paid before you leave the house—that's soon settled; but I am sorry to hear that you are short of cash. Some of your neighbours call you a schemer, and turn you into ridicule; do you know it?

Spok. It is very true, sir, that I am laughed at, but

I laugh too; that's the way to go through the world, as my father used to say.

Mor. I'll tell you what, neighbour Spokeum, it is much easier for fools to laugh at a proposed invention than to understand it when done.

Spok. Ay, sir, that's true enough: only that we projectors should not tell our secrets, I could show you the whole contrivance with seventeen wheels, and——

Gold. No, no, we don't wish to forestall you, or to put you out of heart.

Mor. Who have laughed at you most? do I know any of the parties?

Spok. Why there is the Thatcher, and he, you know, is a bit of a poet: he wants to set me about a contrivance to cut moonshine into slices! I don't know what to say to him; I am afraid he is too great a fool for anything.

Gold. Don't mind him, then; that is your only defence.

Spok. But I have silenced another of my tormentors completely, by just turning round upon him with a few words.—You know the justice's clerk in the next village?

Mor. Know him, yes; he sets wheels to work too, but they will do more mischief than yours.

Spok. Well, sir, he wanted to know if I could not invent a machine to make lawyers honest.

Gold. A very desirable thing, certainly.

Mor. And what could you say to him?

Spok. O sir, very little, sir; but it came out in a minute—it came of itself. Says I, that machine has been invented long before we were born, and I have only to take pattern by one that has stood up on our common for these forty years; it only consists of two strong upright posts, with a cross bar at the top—you understand me, gentlemen.

Gold. Why, Spokeum, you are a wit, and half a wag too, I perceive.

Spok. Ay, sir, they all set up a loud laugh, not at "Old Hops," as they call me, but at the lawyer. I think I was "down upon him" there, as my father used to say.—Knock your foes down one at a time, that's the way to settle them.

Mor. But what can you do when they make you angry? for all silly cunning-headed banterers try at that first.

Spok. Sir, I defy them to make me angry, unless they speak slightingly of my son Joel; that I can't bear at all! Why, gentlemen, my son Joel and I, and your honours, are the cleverest men in these two parishes.

Gold. Thank you, Spokeum, for the honour you do us.

Spok. Now indeed, your honour, I don't want to give offence, for I know it to be true.

Gold. You are not likely to give offence, man; but we must leave you rather abruptly, for we are engaged at the hall.—Remember what I told you; get your money of the housekeeper before you go home.

Spok. Thank you, sir.

Mor. And, Spokeum, don't you spare them an inch; a repartee is often better than a cudgel.

Spok. And I can use both upon occasion.—Good morning to you, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt* GOLDHAWK *and* MORRISON.

Two fine-hearted fellows these! and who is to be cast down by what the rest can say?

AIR—BY SPOKEUM.

What though they call me *old Hops*, old Hops,
Why should a wise man care?
I'll search it all out, and bring it about,
And leave the boobies to stare!

SCENE III.

A Drawing-Room at Lady HAZELWOOD'S.

LADY HAZELWOOD, EMMA, MARY, GOLDHAWK, *and* MORRISON.

Gold. My dear Mary, though you play with feeling and with tenderness, I prefer vocal music to the best toned instruments in the world.—Come, the glee, the glee; I have heard it but twice.

Lady H. Ay, do oblige us once more.—Emma, you are in voice to-day, and I am sure you are not unhappy by your looks—and, Mr. Morrison——

Mor. O, madam, I am much at your service, and will go over the stream whenever you please.

GLEE FOR THREE VOICES—MORRISON, EMMA, AND MARY.

Love in a show'r safe shelter took
In a rosy bow'r beside a brook,
And wink'd and nodded with conscious pride
To his votaries, drench'd on the other side;
"Come hither, sweet maids, there's a bridge below,
The toll-keeper, Hymen, will let you through—
Come o'er the stream to me."

Then over they went in a huddle together,
Not caring much about wind or weather;
The bow'r was sweet, and the show'r was gone,
Again broke forth the' enlivening sun;
Some wish'd to return, but the toll-keeper said,
"You're a wife now, lassy, I pass'd you a maid;
Get back as you can for me!"

Mor. There now, my dear Emma, I have caught you in your own net; you won't hear a word talked

about Hymen and the rest of them, but you can sing heathenism as well as I can.

Emma. There's a great deal of difference between talking and singing silly things: any nonsense will do for a song.

Gold. So it will, Emma; and one of our dramatic writers has said, that "Nonsense always sounds best when set to music:"—but what strange figure is this just coming to the door?

Enter a STRANGER, *unceremoniously.*

Stran. Ladies, your most devoted—my name is Whirlwind—Jack Whirlwind, from town, at your service; fourth cousin to Lady Hazelwood, and fifth cousin to her daughter.—Father has been worrying me for this half-year to come and lose myself in country lanes, to look after his relations, and to pick up a wife amongst them—that's what the old blade means at the bottom.

Lady H. Sir, you do me and my house great honour in this visit.

Whirl. O, I know I do, I know it.—That's the girl, I dare say, (*looking at Emma through a glass*)—Don't like her though, don't like her at all—never saw her before in my life—she won't do (*aside, addressing himself to* GOLDHAWK).—A ha! old gentleman—something of the military cut, I think (*looking down him*).—I say, who is that pretty little puss under her wing in the corner, ha?

Gold. That 's the dairy-maid, who has been a good girl this morning and pleased her mistress, and so is admitted into the drawing-room.

Whirl. Come, come, no gammon, old boy; it won't do for me; I know the world.—I say, what wretched roads you have about you—you ought to be indicted; I ran my gig against a post upon the common, broke my shafts, been down to an old beast of a wheel-wright in the village to get it repaired.

Gold. Pray, sir, do you always talk as fast as you do now?

Whirl. Always talk, and ride, and drive, as fast as I can; it is the tip of the fashion—came forty miles in four hours!

Gold. I don't recollect any post on the common, but a stump of the old gibbet.

Whirl. You are a queer old chap, I find—I'll talk to the young one.—Now here's a decent, promising young fellow. (*To* MORRISON) What a pity you don't take a season or two in Hyde-park; it would make quite another thing of you: you should see me drive four in hand, skim over the ground like a swallow: crash goes a wheel, either mine or another's, no matter which.

Mor. But the damage, sir—who pays the billls?

Whirl. O, is it bills you are talking about? Why, father meets all my bills; have not paid a bill these five years.—I'll tell you a secret—don't like your girl at all. No need to be jealous—she is too cold—not one of my sort. Besides, I caught her laughing at my garb not a minute ago;—laugh at a man of my figure!—Poor country thing, she knows no better.

Mor. (*Aside*). Impudent puppy!

Emma (*Her hand on his shoulder*). Donald, don't disgrace yourself; let him alone, I love to see the thing jump round the room—let him alone, it is quite irresistible, it must out—ha, ha! ha, ha!

Whirl. There's another specimen of country manners—laugh at a gentleman to his face!

Emma. Sir, I know I ought to beg pardon, but I am subject to fits; you must not mind me; I am often taken in this way, but very harmless, especially to my mother's distant relations, ha, ha!

Whirl. Distant enough we shall continue, depend upon it.

Emma. What a pity!

Whirl. I say, little one, (*to* MARY) were you ever in

town? No, I dare say not; buried alive in a forest, there 's a taste for you!—Do you know your own sweetheart when you see him, ha?

Mary. I know a coxcomb when I see him, which, thank Heaven, is very seldom.

Whirl. Ay, all alike, I see.

Lady H. I am sorry, sir, that my daughter and her young friend are so rude to you; but they will have their way.

Whirl. O, let them have their way by all means, and I'll have mine.—Never stop long in a place; shall be in town again to-night, if my wheels and my tit will hold out.—Well, lieutenant (*to* GOLDHAWK), can I do any thing for you at the War-office?—Always glad to serve my friends!

Gold. Thank you!—To be sure, poor lieutenants have been assisted before now through very strange channels.

Whirl. As to you, young sportsman (*to* MORRISON), I wish you plenty of game; always carry good flints, and mind your priming.—Shall call at the old wheelwright's in my way, and then off like a meteor.—Bye, bye, cousin Hazelwood.

"Scots wha hae with Wallace bled," &c.
"Caledonia on wi me."

[*Exit* WHIRLWIND.

Mor. There 's a fellow now to profane the names of Bruce, and Wallace, and Burns! There 's a pretty fellow to have a devoted nation at his heels, and a dreadful invader in his front! poh, poh, poh! If it were not for the great names which this thing has the impudence to pronounce, I should sink beneath his monkeyism, and be ashamed of my origin.

Emma (*Laughing immoderately*). Donald, this is a treat for you!

Lady H. Why really, Emma, you make yourself quite ridiculous.

Emma. I cannot help it, mamma. I saw you laugh

yourself, when you spoke to him. Did you mark the tail of his coat? ha, ha, ha!

Gold. Now, for my part, I am glad he came so opportunely, for here Mary has seen a true specimen of what I meant by a "Lady's protector." How do you like him, child?

Mary. Why, I wonder whom he broke loose from. I feel ashamed for him; and that is the worst feeling in the world, I should think, except feeling ashamed of one's self.

Gold. Now will this madman go down and plague old Spokeum out of his life: I should like to see the meeting.

Emma. So should I—but why should this unexpected adventure deprive us of our afternoon's pleasure? My fit is now almost over; but I shall remember the tail of his coat for this twelvemonth!

[*Scene changes.*

SCENE IV.

SPOKEUM'S *House.*

Enter SPOKEUM *and* JUDITH.

Spok. How I wish, Judie, that Joel had been at home when this strange fellow called; I shall never make him believe that such a being was ever trusted with a gig.

Jud. I never saw such a one however, and I have been half over the nation in my younger days with my Lady Hazelwood.

Enter JOEL.

Spok. O my boy, I am glad you are come: have you seen the wild man?

Joel. Wild man, father, what do you mean?

Spok. Why he has been here; he rides in a thing for all the world like a butter-basket, and talks like a

man in his sleep, all fits, and starts, and half sentences. He broke his shaft upon the common, either against the gallows or the old gibbet, I don't know which, and I have been mending it; I got his half-crown though.

Jud. And, Joel, he has been up at the hall, for he asked me who that pretty little puss was that sat by the young lady.

Joel. He can't mean Mary?

Jud. I don't know what he meant, but those were his very words.

Spok. (*returning in haste from the door*).—Joel, don't be alarmed, but I heard a horrible shriek up the road:—what shall we do?

Joel. Where's my cudgel? Stand out of my way, Judie, you are always in the way: clear the road, I say.

Jud. My dear boy, don't be so passionate.

[*Exit* JOEL.

Don't run yourself into danger; be advised. O dear, O dear, I might as well talk to a hail-storm: what strange things these great boys are! He'll be gone half a mile before I can sit down and compose myself.

SCENE V.

The cross Road in the Avenue—WHIRLWIND *forcing* MARY *into his Carriage.*

Whirl. Come along, my little charmer—I'll make you happy as a princess—splendid apartments—drive a curricle—have a box at the opera every night—come along.

Mary. Unhand me, you robber!—you miscreant! O if Joel were here!

Enter JOEL, *who knocks him down.*

Joel. What 'game are you at, you tallow-faced ruffian? Answer when you get up; I'll give you time.

Whirl. Why I say, that you are an uncivil brute, and I'll prosecute you for an assault.

Joel. And I say, if you have nothing better to urge, I'll pound your head into pepper.

Mary. Dear Joel, don't put yourself into a passion, and venture your life against such a man.

Joel. Venture my life! what my life against that farthing candle! I say, Mr. Dastard, Mr. Thief, or whatever name you may be, take yourself off as quick as possible.

Whirl. I have lost my hat.

Joel. Are you sure it is not your head? that loss would be a blessing to your family.

Whirl. Where's my carriage?

Joel. O here's your carriage, as you call it: be nimble, be nimble, be nimble, I tell you.

Whirl. Don't murder me, and I will go as fast as I can get the reins; but you are a—

Joel. Come, no preaching, or I'll put my shoulder against your butter-basket, as father calls it, and turn you all into the ditch in half a minute—be nimble.

Whirl. Well, I am going—but you are a set of country brutes all together, and don't know how to behave to a gentleman. [*Exit* WHIRLWIND.

Joel. Well, mayhap it may be so, for I have but just begun to learn.—Now, my dear Mary, the field is our own, as a soldier would say. How do you feel yourself? Were you very much frightened?

Mary. Not very much, though he came upon me here when I was taking my sun-set walk, as I call it; but when I knew my enemy, I turned angry, and then good-bye fainting and affectation; I have none of them.

Joel. Then you wanted a cudgel?

Mary. Yes, but I would not have used it so unmercifully as you did: I wonder you did not knock his brains out.

Joel. Poh! there was no fear of that: it was only a single rap—nothing but a bit of a taster.

Mary. But really we must part; we are not far from the house, and I would rather go in alone.—I'll give a true account of the adventure to Emma and my lady; it shall be all to your credit.

Joel. Well, but no reward before we part?

Mary. Why I am not a queen, to dub you a knight on the field of battle!

Joel. No, but you can give me a reward of much greater value.

Mary. There, there, dear Joel, don't be so foolish: let me go.—Farewell! [*Exit* MARY.

Joel. There's a girl for you now;—who would not break a cudgel in her defence? I would say so to half the world, if it was here to hear me; but my heart says so, and that's all the same.

AIR.

Here first I met the lovely maid,
When Hope was young, and dared not soar;
And round my heart the flame has play'd,
That binds me to these shades the more.

Touch'd by the breeze, with graceful swing,
The tow'ring branches mingling play,
When the sap dances up in spring,
And when their autumn leaves decay.

What joys may rural conquerors prove,
Far from the dreadful conflict's roar!
I've rescued her, the maid I love;
Dear shades, I prize you still the more!

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter EMMA *and* MARY.

Emma. Poor little thing then, and was it almost ran away with, and not quite! O, if I could but have seen you kicking!

Mary. Indeed, Emma, he made no resistance after Joel came up, but ran away and yelpt, like a puppy as he is: but how can you be so provoking as to laugh at me? It may be your turn one of these days: pray what would you do in the same situation?

Emma. Do! why, kick and scream, most likely: and then it would be your turn to laugh, you know. But really, Mary, I don't laugh at *you*, but at my own thoughts: I love you better every day I live; but for all that, it would have been a treat to have seen you kicking, you must have looked so formidable!

Mary. Now, have done with this trifling, for I have the captain to meet yet; and I dread him, for he will certainly either scold, or make game of his little girl, as he calls me.

Emma. No such thing: never fear him; he is a man of sense and principle. I would trust my honour and life in his keeping without a scruple. Besides, he will speak well of Joel, and then, I am sure, you will be friends.

Mary. I wish it was over though.

Enter CAPTAIN GOLDHAWK *and* LADY HAZELWOOD.

Gold. Well, my lady, I will think of all you have been saying: in the mean time keep up your spirits, whatever be the cause of your uneasiness.—So, Mary

(*addressing her*), you have been in the wars, I hear! What, neither killed nor taken prisoner, ha? I have heard all about it. O, these whirlwinds are terrible things to encounter! I have seen a whirlwind take an oak by the top, and shiver him down to his very root like a whisp of grass!

Mary. That must have been a terrible sight indeed, sir; but, in your instance, it was the whirlwind struck the oak; in mine, it was the oak struck the whirlwind, for Joel was there.

Gold. Well said, child; it was nobly done, and I like the young fellow all the better for it: he rescued you from the clutches of a rascal—a soldier could have done no more!

Lady H. Really, captain, these are strange occurrences in our peaceable neighbourhood; and I begin to think that I must keep a watchful eye over Emma, or she may be attempted next.

Gold. Ay, very true, my lady; for there is a charming echo down by the forest side, and "*Who but happy Donald.*"

Mary. Begging your pardon, sir, Donald, as you call him, is not a Jack Whirlwind, so that our cases are entirely dissimilar.

Emma. So they are, dear, thank you.

Gold. Ay, I see you will both stick to the same text; and, perhaps, it is best so, for you are not half wicked enough to be hypocrites, if you were to try.

Emma. Well, but, good captain, I was going to say that Mr. Morrison.—But, I declare, there is no talking in this house without interruption.

Enter SERVANT, *speaking to* EMMA.

Serv. Madam, here is Betty, Mr. Morrison's servant, all in tears; and begs to speak to you directly on matters of importance, she says.

Emma. Matters of importance? What can that

mean, I wonder?—Morrison is not ill, I hope.—Let her come in.—Mamma, you will excuse it, I know.

Lady H. Certainly, child; but I feel rather alarmed, I confess.

Gold. Why, Lady Hazelwood, your house is like an enchanted castle; nothing but distressed damsels, assaults, rescues, and mysteries. I should not wonder if old Merlin were come again, and had taken up his quarters in the forest.

Enter BETTY *sobbing and curtsying.*

Emma. Hey-day! Betty, what dreadful news have you to tell? Be firm, girl: why thus agitated?

Betty. O madam—my master is very angry, and I shall be turned away, and lose John Gosling besides. What will become of me? I know that a word of yours will do anything with master—do pray speak in my favour.

Emma. Well, I will do all in my power; but compose yourself.—*Very* angry, say you? I never saw him so in my life. What have you done to provoke him?

Betty. O dear, madam, my troubles are all come at once, as they always do. A fox from the forest broke into the hen-house last night, and there is such a slaughter! and master is *so* angry: and the captain's man has broken his shins over my pail—but that almost serves him right, for he can never let me alone.—And then there are the chickens——

Lady H. But what is all this to us? Do you think it worth crying about?

Betty. But, my Lady, the worst of it is to come: I have been churning the whole morning, and cannot get a mite of butter!—But I know the reason well enough.

Emma. Then be so good as to tell us, for I can make nothing of you yet.

Betty. Why, it is bewitched, madam.

Emma. Poh, poh, say no more.

Betty. Now, there lies the misfortune; for master

don't believe in witchcraft, and so I must lose my place. But, madam, as I passed old Nan Barret yesterday, with my new bonnet on, she gave me such an evil look, as would have spoiled all the cream in the county. I was sure that mischief would follow. A spiteful old creature! she looks as though she had never been young; and I am sure she never could have been handsome, for all the children in the parish are afraid of her.—Do pray speak for me, madam; for I never was so full of trouble in my life (*Weeping*).

Emma. Now, go along, you simpleton, and I promise you my entire interest in your behalf.

Betty. O, thank you, ma'am; and, I am sure, John will forgive me—I shall see him soon! [*Exit* BETTY.

Gold. Now, from the conduct and manner of that girl, who would not have guessed that the enemy had landed, the plague broke out, the army revolted, or some other national calamity had befallen us?

Emma. Well, but, dear sir, in any one of these cases, as in this, your man, John, must have been concerned, and Betty seems to live for nobody else.

Gold. It does look like it, indeed: let him take care of his shins though, and I shall have an eye to the pail myself, for I am going now to seek out Morrison: I want to talk with him.—Ladies, I leave you for the present—farewell.

Lady H. Farewell, captain: but we shall be sure to see you to-morrow?

Gold. True as the sun. [*Exit* GOLDHAWK.

Emma. Now, dear mamma, let me have my way.—Your favourite remedy, you know, when the spirits are affected, is to get out of the house.—So come along, Mary; perhaps we shall meet with another Whirlwind, fine as the evening is—come along.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE II.

The Village Green, with MORRISON'S *House.*

GOLDHAWK *and* MORRISON *meeting.*

Gold. This is fortunate, for I was just taking a stroll down to speak to you.

Mor. Come in then, and let us talk over a glass.

Gold. No, I had rather be in the open air; I have been housed up too much to-day.—Have you noticed that Lady Hazelwood has been agitated and fidgety of late? I cannot make out the cause.

Mor. I have observed it, but Emma cannot or does not choose to inform me, and I have refrained from asking,

Gold. Well, she is very anxious that I should esteem and think well of young Joel, the wheelwright: to be sure she has known me from my childhood, and my wife was like her own sister; but she calls me her old friend and counsellor, though I have been living in India these twenty years.

Mor. True, whilst everybody in England believed you dead years ago.—But we will change our route, so as to meet your servant Gosling: I have something to give him, and then we can talk without interruption. Come, you can climb stiles, for we have no pioneers here, you know.

[*Exeunt* GOLDHAWK *and* MORRISON.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. I am glad you are gone, though you are a good master; for now I can meet John with some comfort—I hope he won't disappoint me.

SONG.

Come, John Gosling, put your Sunday clothes on;
Gladly shall I see you stump across the green,
And I'll sing, dear John, by the couch that you repose on,
And bring you such ale as was never, never seen.
Come, lift the latch, John,
Let me see your face;
And who shall be so happy and so blest as I and you!
Here you'll see the leaves a shaking,
Here you'll hear the pigs a squeaking;
Gobble, gobble, gobble, gobble; quack, quack, quack,
And cock a doodle doo!
Round our farm-yard yellow corn is growing,
Geese marching home with their cunning heads so high;
Down in the meads, John, there the cows are lowing;
The ducks in the pond, and the grunters in the sty.
Come, lift the latch, John, &c.

Well, what a tiresome thing this is—this "*Will you, or won't you,*" sort of work—I hate it.—O! now I see him bobbing his head behind the blackthorns—that's just to plague me now—but never mind, here he is.

Enter JOHN.

Gos. Betty, you had not given me up, had you, Betty?—O, I have such news to tell you.

Betty. News!—my stars, what is it? Is it anything about me?

Gos. No, not a word about you; it is all in this bit of paper.

Betty. O, let me see it.

Gos. Well, don't be in such a hurry; I have other things to talk of first. I have been thinking, Betty, that before we marry, it would be best to understand

one another, as the gentlefolks do; not about jointures and pin-money, and all that, but——

Betty. Now, hang me if I have not been thinking about the very same thing—how odd that is now, is not it?

Gos. Come, stand close by my side thus, and I'll tell you all about it. Hem! the first thing I shall grant is this, the poker shall always stand on your side of the fire-place—I will have nothing to do with it.

Betty. Well, that's very reasonable of you, for I always manage our kitchen fire myself—but you'll pay for coals and billets, I suppose?

Gos. Why—why—yes; I rather think that will fall to my share of course.

Betty. Well, now for the news then.

Gos. Don't be in such a hurry, I say: I have another promise to make you.—When you shall happen to be going abroad, and shall spend a full hour in putting on your bonnet, looking for pins, and gloves, and pattens, and shall lose the beautiful sunshine, and be just ready when the rain pours down—I won't be out of patience, if I can possibly help it.

Betty. Well, I am sure that is as much as any man can promise, before he has tried it.—Well, but now for the letter—I want the news—

Gos. Here it is, then. This was given me by no less a man than your master. Hear now what he says—(*reading the letter.*)

"The solicitor whom I employed in your behalf writes me thus—'Please to inform Mr. Gosling,—(*Mr. Gosling!* mind that), Mr. Gosling, that the sale of his father's estate was not conducted with either law or justice; and that it will revert to him in about six months.'—Honest John, I am glad to have served you.

"DONALD MORRISON."

There now, what say you to that?

Betty. But what is *revert?*

Gos. Why revert means, "to come back;" for I asked his honour, the captain, and he ought to know.

Betty. Then Duck Bottom comes back to John Gosling, ha!—That's rare news, indeed! Come into the house and have some ale, and we'll talk it all over.

Gos. Yes, Gosling John, as they call me, will now be Mr. Gosling, Freeholder:—Well, I always thought this hat was a silly-shaped thing, and too little for me, and now it won't go on at all.

[*Sets his hat fantastically, and exit with* BETTY.

SCENE III.

A Parlour in Hazelwood-Hall.

MORRISON *and* EMMA.

Mor. Why, my dear Emma—is it a month, or a week, or only a day and a half, since we met? It seems a length of time; but, I assure you, I have been much engaged.

Emma. O! I don't doubt it: I dare say the double-barrel and the powder-horn have been hard at work.

Mor. No, they've not, indeed.—But has Joel been here to-day or yesterday?

Emma. Not to my knowledge. But what can you have to do with that?

Mor. Nothing; only from a conversation I had last night with the captain, I thought he might have been here, nothing further.

Emma. So you have been engaged?

Mor. I have, indeed. Betty is made perfectly easy as to her late calamities; and I have procured for the captain's man, John, the settlement of his affair about the freehold,—and—but hang it, how have *you* done all the while? What village news have you to com-

municate? You look most happy, and most lovely, but that's no news at all.

Emma. Well, since you will be foolish in your own way, I will submit to be catechised. First then—I am here as you see.—My mamma and the captain are in close conference in the adjoining apartment—Mary has furnished herself with a book from the library, and is walking round the shrubbery as fast as her little legs can carry her—and old Spokeum is at work in the dairy, setting up a new churn.—There's all the news at once.

Mor. O! thank you—quite a gazette! Never mind how trifling the subjects; if you are concerned in them, they must be interesting: even Love itself is oftener proved by trifles than by protestations; and I never loved this little village half so ardently as when I had been visiting the mountains of Scotland.

AIR. (*Morrison*).

Thus thinks the trav'ler journeying still,
Where mountains rise sublime;
What but these scenes the heart can fill,
What charm like yonder giant hill?
—A molehill clothed with thyme.

What can exceed the joy of pow'r?
—That joy which conquerors prove
In sceptred rule—where all must cow'r;
What can exceed that mad'ning hour?
—Why, peace—and home—and love!

Enter CAPTAIN GOLDHAWK, *followed by* LADY HAZELWOOD.

Gold. Indeed, Lady Hazelwood, I have given you the best advice in my power in this delicate affair, in which you take such an interest; and I feel honoured in being thus consulted.

Lady H. I know I have troubled you, but I beg your further patience.

Mor. Had not we better retire, my lady? as we would not willingly intrude upon private conversation.

Gold. Retire! No, I won't hear a word about it: in what I say all shall be "fair and above board," as the sailors have it: the more witnesses the better; and here comes one principally concerned.

Enter MARY.

Come hither, little innocent! We have been talking about you in your absence;—backbiting you, if you please.

Mary. Oh! sir, you are too noble to stoop to that, I am sure; and I have nothing to hide, and nothing to fear.

Gold. And where is the old man with his noisy hammer? he is father of the youth, and I will not offend any one: let him be called.

Emma. Indeed, mamma, you look pale: you had better be seated.

Enter SPOKEUM.

Gold. Emma, your mother has almost put me out of patience, but I here declare before you all, that, if I had as many children as old Priam, and any one of them had formed an attachment like this, so pure, so ardent, and so honourable, I would not "break it off," as my lady calls it; I would not attempt it. It would be a much more merciful deed to break their necks.

Lady H. Then I must declare to you, Captain Goldhawk, that as sure as you stand there, a living man, this dear girl, whom I have called Mary Maythorn, is your own child!

Spok. O dear, my lady, you look very ill.—Shall I run for the doctor?

Lady H. No, no—run for old Judith, and be quick. [*Exit* SPOKEUM *in great haste.*] Mary, kneel to your father, whilst I recover my breath.

Mary (*Kneeling*). Oh! I cannot speak!—Pity me —pray pity me. Good Heaven! What am I reserved for next?

Gold. My dear little soul, if this be all true, you are reserved to be a comfort to the old age of your father; and the girl who would not be proud of such an office —may she be sent to——sent to—Java, that's all. Rise, rise, I beg of you, and let us hear more about it.

Emma. Now, my friend and playfellow, (*embracing her*) I can congratulate you with my whole heart. Pray be firm, and happiness lies before you.

Mary. But where is Joel? I must be the first bearer of this news, or I am sure he will break his heart, either with joy or desperation.

Lady H. Child, you are too late; the old man has got the start of you, and you will never overtake him.

Mary. I beg your pardon, madam, but I *must* go— I *will* go. [*Exit* MARY.

Gold. But, Lady Hazelwood, was not I informed, by the very last letters which reached me, when the ship was getting under sail, that my wife was dead, and the infant dead too?

Lady H. Yes, yes, you were; but Providence ordered otherwise: the child revived, and I took it under my special care, whilst you were bounding over the billows.—Old Judith knows all about it.

Gold. But I have been home some months: why not have informed me before? Was this kindly done?

Lady H. Yes, and justly done too—for I was resolved that you should judge with your own eyes of the strength of their affection, before I put it into your power to crush them into misery.—Nay, I tell you more—Had you now suffered false pride, or any other unworthy feeling, to triumph over your better nature, I would—sooner than have seen the girl's heart torn out of her bosom by a separation,—I would have kept my secret till the hour of my death. But you have passed your word, and you are a man of honour.

Mor. Why, captain, you are fairly caught, and I almost envy your feelings, though I am not a father. I am perfectly astounded at all this, and you ought to sit and compose yourself.

Emma. Dear mamma, let me advise once again: let us adjourn to a larger apartment, for they will be all here together, and you will have enough to do to meet them.—Come, take my arm.

Mor. And mine; and you, captain, lead the van, like a conqueror, as you are. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Avenue very near the House.

JOEL *and* MARY *meeting.*

Joel. O my best life, if I may still call you so, I have heard the news, and have outrun my father to find you—and now for joy or misery.

Mary. But pray take breath, and compose yourself for a moment before you speak.

Joel. No, I won't—for if you reject me, I don't care five straws whether I ever breathe again. Will you, now you are a lady, permit me to walk with you, to talk with you, and still to hope?

Mary. Be calm, I beg of you.

Joel. Well, I am calm, as a man can be, who has more than his life at stake.—Will you forget the avenue—the moonlight—the flowers—and my thousand vows of everlasting love, and all I have done to prove it?

Mary. O Joel, hear reason but for a moment.

Joel. Will you, now you are climbing the ladder of life so far above me, spurn me down, because I am a poor man's son?

Mary. You torture me—you break my heart! How

can you think so meanly of me? Only hear me: if we fail at last, I shall be distressed too.

Joel. No; there I defy them! Distress shall never come whilst I have a pair of arms to chop out a cart wheel.

Mary. You strange man—will you hear me? You mistake me still. Must I speak plainer? Well, then will you go with me into the house, and face them all, and show yourself a man?

Joel. Yes!—What else?

Mary. My father—(Oh! that I should ever live to say that word)—my father is very kind and considerate, and holds you in high esteem: all may be right yet—Will you go?

Joel. Will I go at your bidding? Yes, to the world's end, barefoot!—Will I go? Ay, if all Captain Goldhawk's serpents and tigers should guard the door,—see if I won't! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The Drawing-Room in Hazelwood-Hall.

GOLDHAWK *and* LADY HAZELWOOD, MORRISON *and* EMMA.

Gold. Now, Morrison, that I have found a child, I have something to live for; and when the fine autumnal weather is propitious, I'll have a tent fixed in the forest, and we'll all be merry as gipsies.

Emma. Ay, and in the spring too, captain; for that is my season of delight.

Mor. Ay, and of mine, my dearest; and you shall dance amongst the cowslips with our happy-hearted Mary.

Gold. And so, Lady Hazelwood, she has been a good girl, and sensible of all your kindness?

Lady H. Indeed she possesses virtuous feelings and unbounded affection—and what more can be said of a woman?—Here she comes.

Enter MARY *and* JOEL.

Gold. And so, my little comforter, you ran away from me as soon as you had found me?

Mary. Indeed, sir, I felt as though I had two hearts, and I did not know which to obey first. Pray forgive this rudeness; I am sure you will love me the better for it.

Gold. O, it's all forgiven.—"Two hearts," did you say? Then I'll contrive you shall obey them both in a short time; and we will have such charming evenings, and I'll tell you all my old stories about my voyage round the Cape, and all the dreadful lightnings of the Indian Ocean, and all about the tigers of Java!

Mary. O! sir, you really terrify me with the bare thought of the tigers.

Gold. Poh! it's all nonsense, child: why a tiger is nothing more than a great overgrown cat, that don't like to be coaxed when he is wild.

Mor. Joel, you are a lucky fellow! I'll engage that the way is all clear before you—you are a happy man!

Joel (*bowing*). Sir, may I humbly return the compliment?—for the Lady Emma is——

Emma. Hush! here is more company coming.

Enter SPOKEUM *and* JUDITH.

Judith. O, my lady! Spokeum has dragged me along so fast, that I can hardly say how glad I am to see this happy hour—and Miss Emma here and all!

Emma. Judie, you ought to be proud of having performed your duty so well: cheer up, and we shall be all friends together.

Gold. Come, come, I see I can put an end to all this; not by the word of command, but a word of entreaty. —Lady Hazelwood, think of my friend Morrison,

and give him your stag-hunting and heathen-loving daughter; and I will follow your example—join their hands.

Lady H. There, captain, I have done it. This is the happiest hour of my life!—May Heaven's blessing fall upon your heads!

Gold. Joel, my honest lad, come hither; you shall marry my daughter, as sure as a gun: and you, faithful old Judith, shall have fifty pounds a year as long as you live.

Joel. There, old lassy, there!—What do you think of me now?—Come out and help me to jump—come out, I say (*seizing both her hands*).

Judith. Consider my corns—oh, my corns, Joel; you know I can't jump:—don't make yourself quite a fool, boy—don't.

Joel. Why, bless your old heart, you look almost as young and as handsome as Mary!

(*Kissing her violently*).

Spok. And so here have been *two* women keeping a secret for years together!—Was ever such a thing heard of?

Emma. You must not be too much astonished, Spokeum—but you may say *three* women; for I have known it ever since the captain came home.

Spok. What, *three* women kept a secret! why this is more surprising still! it is more wonderful than picking hops by machinery!

Mor. You must be calm, old neighbour, since it is all in your favour.

Spok. Well, sir, begging your honour's pardon, I am as calm as ever I was in my life—but, Judie, I say, old woman, how is this that you never dropped a word of this affair to me?

Judith. It was because I know you; for when you have a little drop of drink in your head (and a very little will do it), you are apt to blab out everything that you know.

Spok. Humph! mayhap you will say that I have got drink in my head now; but I declare that I have had but two horns of ale since I came into the house—(it was plaguey strong though); and I don't care what you say—go on—I tell you I don't care.

Judith. Ay, *don't care*, that's always your word when you are a little vexed; but I know you of old.

Spok. Well, I tell you again, then, I don't care.—Hang me if I care, at this minute, for any man in all the whole globe of England!—there, now.

Emma. Why, Spokeum, don't suffer yourself to be angry; we are all met here to be happy.—Is it not so, mamma?

Lady H. Yes, certainly, child, and who would interrupt it?

Spok. Not I, my lady. I'll warrant I'll be as merry as my betters, for who is to mind what that old woman is squeaking about?—I don't care a farthing for her.

Emma. O, Morrison, John and Betty are coming.

Mor. So much the better, my life. I guess their errand; it will soon be over.

Enter JOHN *and* BETTY.

Gos. "Most noble sir, for all favours received, I have thought it my bounden duty to"—what was the next, Betty?

Betty. O, don't ask me; I have forgot every word of it, I'm sure.

Gos. An' please your honour, I had made a little speech on purpose, but in coming along we have both forgot it. However the long and the short of the story is this—I thank your honour for the restoration of Duck-Bottom—(ay, "restoration," that was one of the words, I am sure).

Mor. O, say no more, John; you are perfectly welcome to all the services I can render you at any time.

Betty. And, sir, an' please your honour; and now my husband (that is to be) is a freeholder (*curtsying*),

and sure as I shall be called Mistress Gosling, I promise never to set a pail in his way the longest day I have to live.

Gold. Come, come, Morrison, have done with all that, and look after your fiddlers: what are they all about?

Mor. Why, they are all here, captain, and only wait the beck of my finger to set them off.

FINALE.

Mor. Now, my noble forest shades,
Oaks, perform your duty!
And every cowslip in your glades
Shall bow its head to beauty.

Emma. Villagers, away with care!
Fashion—fie upon her!
Pomp and tinsel we can spare,
For peace, and love, and honour.

(*The sound of bells at a distance*).

Chorus.

Ring the bells and banish sorrow,
Joy and sunshine come to-morrow.

Joel. The wheel of fortune whirls around,
To bring us grief or pleasure;
But I the girl of girls have found—
A fig for rank and treasure!

Mary. Mine's the double prize at last,
And double raptures move me—
A father's arms to hold me fast—
An honest man to love me!

Chorus.

Ring the bells and banish sorrow,
Joy and sunshine come to-morrow.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

A SELECTION

FROM THE

REMAINS OF ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

PREFACE.

Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes, live their wonted fires.

GRAY.

THE poetical merits of Robert Bloomfield have been long established; and the public favour which attended his previous writings can leave no doubt as to the reception of the following Fragments. They are the gleanings of that rich harvest which in days gone by afforded to many a luxurious treat.

It may seem superfluous to attempt any comment on the poetry of Bloomfield. Some, no doubt, have soared on bolder wings, or tuned their lyres to nobler themes; but very few touch, with a hand so delicate, the finest sensibilities of the heart; or lead the affections, with such gentle force, to virtue and to happiness.

His pictures are drawn *directly* from nature; are *always just* and *true*, like the reflections of a polished mirror; while in other poets we frequently meet with dazzling and distorted images, which resemble the face of nature when viewed through a prism. Another excellence, peculiar to Bloomfield, is the extreme purity

of his taste, which, considering his want of education, is really wonderful.

His rural scenes are never infested with dryads, or fauns, or genii, or any other phantoms of foreign extraction; they are also free from every taint of local superstition, and indeed from everything else that has the least tendency to corrupt the taste, debase the mind, or demoralize the heart. Everything is simple and unaffected; purely pastoral and truly English. Hence some have pronounced his poetry *tame*,[1] and deficient in classical embellishment.

He never stood in need of meretricious graces; his soul was full of tenderness and harmony; and, like the sweet warbler of the grove, he poured it all out in song.

But what has always been esteemed his highest excellence is, that he never trifles with religion;—never treats the solemn objects of it with freedom and levity. He regarded religion as a thing to be practised, not a thing to be prattled about; and the prevailing aim of his writings was to fill the heart with that holy awe, which the silent contemplation of infinite goodness alone can inspire.

The merit of his works in this respect has been duly appreciated; they have been found to be fitted for all ages, conditions, and opinions. No one can read them without improvement, as well as delight.

(1) The most striking feature of Blomfield's poetry is plain good sense. The vagaries of imagination are always, by him, restrained within the bounds of sober reason and solid judgment.

In the preface to the "Farmer's Boy" a memoir was given of his early life, sufficient at that time to gratify curiosity, and to interest the public in his fate.

The world will learn with astonishment, that Bloomfield has been traduced on the subject of religion! Robert Bloomfield! — whose life was one pure and gentle stream of overflowing kindness; in whose meek and quiet spirit there was "*indeed* no guile;" whose conversation and writings were ever filled with incentives to piety; and (if the expression is not too bold) whose very soul was composed of adoration and love!

I never in my life knew a man who fulfilled this divine precept so completely as Robert Bloomfield, in whom the afflicted always found a ready advocate; the needy a liberal friend; and whose moral conduct, I solemnly believe, had not a stain.

POETICAL FRAGMENTS.

[The following lines, written in 1789, on the death of my half-brother, Isaac Glover, who died at the age of sixteen, were almost lost to my friends, and entirely lost to my own memory;—but my sister having discovered them in an old pocket-book, has kindly transcribed them for me. I here write them verbatim, from her copy.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.]

ELEGY.

TELL me, my troubled soul, why dost thou live,
'Midst perishable dust, in worse than nought?
What is the joy—if earth a joy can give—
To make thy longer tarrying worth a thought?

Friendship thou lov'st; from God the cherub came
To link congenial souls, and bid them soar;—
Thy raptures spring from friendship's sacred flame,
Fair op'ning friendship,—and the *hope* of *more*.

Though fled his kindred spirit from my sight,
His cheering converse vibrates on my ear;
Though here he speaks no more, the silent night
Recalls each word, and seals it with a tear!

THIS, his cold bed! Heart, pour thy anguish forth,
While the pale moon-beams witness to thy truth;
O tell, if language can, his early worth—
Tell what *I* lost—when droop'd the gen'rous youth.

Affection cries—he virtue's paths had trod;
His mind wide opening, anxious to improve,
He wonder'd hourly at the works of God:
His soul was wisdom, and his heart was love.

Meekness and truth in every word he said,
Pity's soft tears would tremble in his eyes;
All gentle virtues, bless'd him while he staid;
And waft him from us, to their native skies.

TO HIS FATHER-IN-LAW (CHURCH).

Wednesday-night, Dec. 28—91.

HON. FATHER,

IT would have been a great pleasure to us both to have met you at Mr. Wyatt's this time, and we are only prevented by visitors, who came quite unexpected. You would have liked to have seen our little one; and I hope you will yet, before long. We thank you for all your kindness, and as I am endeavouring to get into business for myself, I sincerely hope, to have it in my power, to entertain you better when you come. I have an undeniable chance. I have some good customers, and might have enough immediately, to provide a genteel living for my wife and child, if I could take advantage of it soon. If I could get three months' credit at my leather-cutters, for five or six pounds only, it would enable me to give credit to that amount, as my custom lies among such, as are able and willing to improve it: but I am determined to carry it on as well as I can.

The unwritten lines, contain the sentiments, which always occur to my mind when I come to Woolwich; and as I put them into metre when the Boyne was launched, and they are still perfect on my mind, I write them now, because I think you have a relish for such things, particularly the devotional parts of them.

Before I was married, I often amused myself with such compositions, and had several pieces published in newspapers, magazines, &c.; but I find other employment now, which is of equal pleasure to me.

My Polly and child are in good health, and I hope to hear from you soon; and remain yours, in duty and affection,

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

ON SEEING THE LAUNCH OF THE BOYNE.

WHENCE comes the joy, which longest warms the heart?
Can mutual love, can friendship's self impart
Raptures unmix'd—Thoughts constantly the same,
Like those which feed devotion's sacred flame,
When glows the breast with more than mortal fires,
And boundless gratitude to heaven aspires?

Through the wide field of arts, with true delight,
Unceasing wonders crowd upon our sight!
—Lo, yon vast pile,[1] for noblest ends supplied,
Majestic greets the slowly rising tide!
—While, less in bulk,—but more amazing far,
View, in her infant stage, that ship of war.

Who, from the hills, this boundless prospect sees,
Must silent praise,—or utter words like these:
Sweet child of heaven!—Thee, Gratitude, we bless,
Through life how lovely, in whatever dress;
Thou cheer'st the path, with care and peril trod,
And lift'st the soul, and point'st the way to God!
—Man sees with pleasure, and exulting rears
The shapely column, and the dome it bears;
And thus confined, we view with conscious heart
The perfect symmetry of every part:
But scaped the walls, we look to earth and sky,
And all the wonders half-reveal'd on high,
Where the charm'd soul contemplates her abode,
And matchless order speaks th' eternal God!

On that famed hill, where Flamstead's vigorous mind,
By midnight meditations, taught mankind;
When gleam'd the moon, and silence reign'd around,
The scene was awful, and the thought profound;
Heaven's beaming orbs, which gild the fearful night,
Ten thousand lesser stars that 'scape the sight,
To him were clear, were intimately known,
And all his pleasure was a God to own;
Yet one step more improves the glorious thought,
God made the man, and made the stars he sought.

(1) Greenwich Hospital.

Show the inquiring mind,—which seeks to know,
Objects where men their utmost skill bestow;
—Show him (where Thames her swelling bosom heaves)
The tow'ring vessel, destined to the waves.
See fix'd astonishment seize every power,
Like one short moment flies the favour'd hour;
And with what thrillings doth his heart attend
The vast design,—the purpose, and the end?

The forest mourns its largest, stateliest trees,
Here hewn and fashion'd with the greatest ease;
Enormous limbs of season'd, solid oak,
Yield their rough sides to labour's sturdy stroke.
Exact proportion, rules in height and length,
That great first principle,—resistless strength;
Strength well required, when o'er the foaming deeps,
Th' undaunted mariner, his reckoning keeps.

Behold her, through the opposing billows cleave,
And far behind the land of freedom leave;
Triumphantly she bears to distant shores
A thousand men, with all their pond'rous stores.
Amazing thought!—Yet more amazing still—
—This complicated MASS of human skill,
When storms arise, is like a feather toss'd,
Her monstrous bulk comparatively lost.
Waves roll her over, terror fills the skies,
She rends asunder!—every creature dies!
O God! by winds thou canst destroy or save!
O Lord of life! Thy ocean is their grave!
Whate'er is great or awful, from Thee springs!
We, by imperfect, judge of perfect things.
—If works of art our admiration raise,
Thine be the worship—Thine the sacred praise.

TO HIS MOTHER,

WITH A COPY OF "THE FARMER'S BOY."

"To peace and virtue still be true;"
An anxious Mother ever cries,
Who needs no *present* to renew
Parental love—which never dies.
Yet, when to know, and see and hear
All that the GREAT and GOOD have done,
This present will be doubly dear
. . . . . "*Your* favour'd poet is—MY son."

TO HIS WIFE.

I RISE, dear Mary, from the soundest rest,
A wandering, way-worn, musing, singing guest.
I claim the privilege of hill and plain;
Mine are the woods, and all that they contain;
The unpolluted gale, which sweeps the glade;
All the cool blessings of the solemn shade;
Health, and the flow of happiness sincere;
Yet there's one wish,—I wish that thou wert here;
Free from the trammels of domestic care,
With me these dear autumnal sweets to share;
To share my heart's ungovernable joy;
And keep the birthday of our poor lame boy.
Ah! that's a tender string! Yet since I find
That scenes like these, can soothe the harass'd mind,
Trust me, 'twould set *thy* jaded spirits free,
To wander thus through vales and woods with me.
Thou know'st how much I love to steal away
From noise, from uproar, and the blaze of day;
With double transport would my heart rebound
To lead thee, where the clustering nuts are found;
No toilsome efforts would our task demand,
For the brown treasure stoops to meet the hand.

Round the tall hazel, beds of moss appear
In green-swards nibbled by the forest deer,
Sun, and alternate shade; while o'er our heads
The cawing rook his glossy pinions spreads;
The noisy jay, his wild-woods dashing through;
The ring-dove's chorus, and the rustling bough;
The far resounding gate; the kite's shrill scream;
The distant ploughman's halloo to his team.
This is the chorus to my soul so dear;
It would delight thee too, wert thou but here:
For we might talk of home, and muse o'er days
Of sad distress, and Heaven's mysterious ways;
Our chequer'd fortunes, with a smile retrace,
And build new hopes upon our infant race;
Pour our thanksgivings forth, and weep the while;
Or pray for blessings on our native isle.
But vain the wish!—Mary, thy sighs forbear,
Nor grudge the pleasure which thou canst not share;
Make home delightful, kindly wish for me,
And I'll leave hills, and dales, and woods for thee.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD

WHITTLEBURY FOREST,
Sept. 16, 1804.

THE portrait of my mother was taken on her last visit to London, in the summer of 1804, and about six months previous to her dissolution. During the period of evident decline in her strength and faculties, she conceived, in place of that patient resignation which she had before felt, an ungovernable dread of ultimate want; and observed to a relative, with peculiar emphasis, that "to meet WINTER, OLD AGE, and POVERTY, was like meeting three giants."

To the last hour of her life she was an excellent spinner; and latterly, the peculiar kind of wool she spun, was brought exclusively for her, as being the only one in the village who exercised their industry on so fine a sort. During the tearful paroxysms of her last depression, she spun with the utmost violence, and with vehemence exclaimed, "*I must spin!*" A paralytic affection, struck her whole right side, while at work, and obliged her to quit her spindle when only half filled, and she died within a fortnight afterwards. I have that spindle now.

She was buried on the last day of the year 1804. She returned from her visit to London, on Friday, the 29th of June, just to a day twenty-three years after she brought me to London, which was also on a Friday, in the year 1781.

TO A SPINDLE.

Relic! I will not bow to thee, nor worship!
Yet, treasure as thou art, remembrancer
Of sunny days, that ever haunt my dreams,
Where thy brown fellows as a task I twirl'd,
And sang my ditties, ere the farm received
My vagrant foot, and with its liberty,
And all its cheerful buds, and op'ning flowers,
Had taught my heart to wander:
—Relic of affection! come;—
Thou shalt a moral teach to me and mine;
The hand that wore thee smooth is cold, and spins
No more! Debility press'd hard, around
The seat of life, and terrors fill'd her brain,—
Nor causeless terrors. Giants grim and bold,
Three mighty ones she fear'd to meet:—they came—
Winter, Old Age, and Poverty,—all came;
The last had dropp'd his club, yet fancy made
Him formidable; and when Death beheld
Her tribulation, he fulfill'd his task,
And to her trembling hand and heart at once,
Cried, "*Spin no more.*"—Thou then wert left half fill'd
With this soft downy fleece, such as she wound
Through all her days, she who could spin so well.
Half fill'd wert thou—half finish'd when she died!
—Half finish'd? 'Tis the motto of the world!
We spin vain threads, and strive, and die
With sillier things than spindles on our hands!

Then feeling, as I do, resistlessly,
The bias set upon my soul for verse;
Oh, should old age still find my brain at work,
And Death, o'er some poor fragment striding, cry
"Hold! spin no more!" grant, Heaven, that purity
Of thought and texture, may assimilate
That fragment unto thee, in usefulness,

In worth, and snowy innocence. Then shall
The village school-mistress, shine brighter through
The exit of her boy; and both shall live,
And virtue triumph too; and virtue's tears,
Like Heaven's pure blessings, fall upon their grave.

KENTISH MARY.

A BALLAD.

YE who urge harsh rules of duty,
Deeming love a *childish* thing;
REBELS to the reign of beauty!
Listen to the song I sing.

Happy day! and means how glorious!
(Weeping 'midst her auburn hair)
Kentish Mary rose victorious,
Rose with honour from despair.

Her William loved, their hearts were pairs,
And well his diamond-worth she knew;
—And what can purchase joy like theirs?
—Not all the gems that ever grew.

Yet was the union of their hands,
From motives which must still be hid,
By her fond father's stern commands
At once delay'd, opposed, forbid!

—"Strive, children, to forget your loves,
"Let passion cool, and reason reign."
—They strove; but time for ever proves
That NATURE will her rights maintain.

She sought (as gloomy sorrow bade),
Far in the Weald, a lonely spot,
Beneath the oak's primeval shade,
To rest till grief should be forgot.

Vain thought! The soul's calamity
The suff'ring frame must ever share!
Sickness bedimm'd her hazel eye;
—In truth, 'twas *more* than she could bear.

Who now shall visit Mary? Who
Bring comfort to her lone abode?
William at once resolved to go,
And passion spurr'd him on the road.

—Their late resolves, with health gave way,
And Pity lent her powerful aid;
And every moment seem'd a day,
Till he could clasp his drooping maid.

O! sweet was then the stolen pleasure!
Conscious honour, love, and fears!
His—fond vows beyond all measure,
Hers—the luxury of tears!

THE DAWNING OF DAY.

A HUNTING SONG.

THE grey eye of morning was dear to my youth,
When I sprang like the roe from my bed,
With the glow of the passions, the feelings of truth,
And the light hand of Time on my head.

For then 'twas my maxim through life to be free,
And to sport my short moments away;
The cry of the hounds was the music for me,
My glory—the dawn of the day.

In yellow-leav'd autumn, the haze of the morn
Gave promise of rapture to come;
Then melody woke in the sound of the horn,
As we cheer'd the old fox from his home;

The breeze and the shout met the sun's early beam,
With the village response in full play;
All vigour, my steed leap'd the fence or the stream,
And was foremost at dawn of the day.

The well-tuned view-halloo that shook the green wood,
And arrested the ploughman's gay song,
Gave nerve to the hunters, and fire to the blood
Of the hounds, as they bounded along.

And shall I relinquish this joy of my heart
While years with my strength roll away?
Hark! the horn—bring my horse—see, they 're ready to start!
Tally-o! at the dawning of day.

ON REPAIRING A MINIATURE BUST OF BUONAPARTE.

FOR MRS. PALMER.

MADAM,

E'EN Lodi's stream, Marengo's plain,
Amidst their heaps of dead,
Still left the illustrious Corsican
His laurels and his head.

What have *you* done? Was it to show
Still dire events portending,
That man may look as pure as snow,
Yet stand in need of mending?

Though mending is in part my trade,
Where step by step I'm led on,
I ne'er the bold attempt yet made
To set a great man's head on.

But satirists may well suspect
That some great heads have long
Been our sole care, and (from neglect)
That we have set them wrong.

But jokes apart, 'tis plain to all,
Who see this broken bust,
The head of the original—
Was rightly placed at first.

THE MAID OF DUNSTABLE.

WHERE o'er the hills, and white as snow,
The channel'd road resounding lies,
And curling from the vale below,
The morning-mists in columns rise;
Blithe at their doors, where glanced the sun,
The busy maidens plied their trade;
And Dunstable may boast of one
As fair as ever fancy made.

A transient glance on her sweet face,
Would bid the chastest bosom glow;
But modesty's resistless grace,
'Tis hers to feel, and hers to show.—
Pure be the cup which thou mayst sip;
May no false swain thy peace annoy;
May prudence guard thy cherry lip,
And virtue lead thy steps to joy.

SONNET.

TO FIFTEEN GNATS SEEN DANCING IN THE SUNBEAMS ON JAN. 3.

WELCOME, ye little fools, to cheer us now,
With recollections of a summer's eve;
And, though my heart, cannot the cheat believe,
Still merrily dance about your leafless bough.
—I love you from my soul; and though I know
Ye can *but die*—to think *how soon*, I grieve;—
Perhaps to-night the *blast of death* may blow;
Frost be at hand—who grants you no reprieve.
—Your company's too small, I ween, that you
Thus raise the shrill note of your summer's song;
Yet dance away—'tis thus that children do,—
And wiser men to life's end dance along.
Die, little gnats, as winds or frosts ordain:—
Death is our frost too—but we fly again.

GOOD-NATURE.

MUCH of good-nature, grey-beards tell,
And make a great to-do:
I've weigh'd their bold assertions well,
And now believe them true.
Let beauty's bloom improve or fade,
Wit bring its good or harm,
'Twas gay good-nature Hymen made
His universal charm.

HOB'S EPITAPH.

A GREY-owl was I when on earth;
My master, a wondrous wise-man,
Found out my deserts and my worth,
And would needs have me bred an exciseman.

He gave me the range of his house,
And a favourite study, his shed,
Where I rush'd on the struggling mouse,
While science rush'd into my head.

In gauging, I still made advances;
Like schoolboy, grew wiser and wiser;
Resolved in the world to take chances,
And try to come in supervisor.

But Fate comes, and Genius must fail:—
One morning, while gauging or drinking,
My wig over-balanced my tail,
And I found myself stifling and sinking.

Yet I died not like men—who still quarrel
Through life—yet to destiny yield:—
The tippler is drown'd in his barrel;
The soldier is slain in the field.—

Not in love—nor in debt—nor in strife—
Nor in horrors attendant on war:—
In a barrel I gave up my life,
But mine was—a barrel of tar.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

BEAT up, my fond heart, the worn veteran cries ;
His dear native village just op'ning to view ;
Here parents—here Anna—here love's tender ties,
Will soothe ev'ry care, ev'ry kindness renew.

Hail, woodlands, though leafless !—Hail, streams so long lost !
My friendships, my cottage, my HOME full in sight !
Thou mansion of bliss, screen my scars from the frost !
I've gold *now*—and *love* will give zest to delight.

O'er kingdoms to thee, rapid Fancy oft flew ;
Thy low mossy roof in fond mem'ry survived ;
Oft homeward at eve, when I took a long view,
I've sigh'd with a tear for the day now arrived !

Round Libia's south point, when from toils lately freed,
Sweet Hope cheer'd my soul whilst we skimm'd the rough sea.
I strove, 'midst the tars, to improve our ship's speed ;
Nor thought I of toils—but of Anna and *thee*.

Here comes the dear girl—comes with kind arms extended
To welcome me home, and my fondness to prove :
My cheek feels the glowing of rapture, warm blended
With answering drops—'tis the meed of chaste love.

HAPPINESS OF GLEANERS.

WELCOME the cot's
Warm walls ! . . . thrice welcome Rest, by toil endear'd ;
Each hard-bed softening, healing ev'ry care !
Sleep on, ye gentle souls,
Unapprehensive of the midnight thief !
—Or, if bereft of all, with pain acquired !
Your fall, with theirs compared, who sink from wealth,
With hands unused to toil, and minds unused
To bend—how little felt !—How soon repair'd !

CHARITY.

In moorland cot—or hovel by the road,
Rest the poor Peasant and his shiv'ring boy,
—And theirs we deem Contentment's blest abode,
Where Fancy riots in ideal joy!—
Shall this bar charity—when spare and thin
The curling smoke o'ertops the winter snow?
Go—cheer decrepitude, that shrinks within,
And bid the eye of palsied age o'erflow.

Lines written hastily, while in King Street, Margate, in August 1822, and given to Mr. Freeman of Minster.

Visitor! whoe'er thou art,
Respect the vine, which climbs this door;
If pain or sorrow wring thy heart,
Seek health along the breezy shore.

Watch the last sun-beams o'er the sea;
And when the eve is calm and clear,
From breathless rooms and raffles flee,—
Music awaits thee on the pier.

The world is gay—the world is vain—
It palls upon the ear and eye;
It brings no treasures in its train:—
Seek health, for there your treasures lie.

THE FLOWERS OF THE MEAD.

How much to be wish'd that the flowers of the mead
The pleasures of converse could yield;
And be to our bosoms, wherever we tread,
The *reasoning* sweets of the field!

But silent they stand,—yet in silence bestow,
What smiles, and what glances impart;
And give, every moment, Joy's exquisite glow,
And the powerful throb of the heart.

FRAGMENT.

'Twas when the abbey rear'd its spires,
Where good St. Edmund buried lies,
A cloister'd maid, with holy fires,
Subdued Love's rebel tears and sighs.

At times subdued, at times she wept,
When came the solemn ev'ning hours;
And often, when she should have slept,
A whisper climb'd the silent towers,
O let poor Anna die!

N.B.—This is too serious for a song.

Wine, beauty, smiles, and social mirth,
Right welcome to the table;
These!——every mother's son of earth
Will honour!——while *he's able.*

EPITAPH FOR A YOUNG LADY.

Youth, cheerfulness, and health, gave up their reign,
To all the bitterness of mortal pain.
Unshaken fortitude possess'd her mind,
And sense grew bright as beauty's rose declined.
In vain kind sisters wept, and hid their fears;
Vain the fond parents' venerable tears!
God to himself, th' unspotted victim drew:
She waits in heaven, ye good and just, for you!

EMMA'S KID.

[Originally accompanying a pair of kid-leather shoes, which the Earl of Buchan had requested me to make with my own hands for his lady, then at Dryburgh Abbey.]

FULL was the moon, and climbing high,
Beam'd soft on Emma's flowing hair,
And rival stars along the sky
Were sparkling through the frosty air.

The powder'd blades on every sod,
Like glittering arms before us lay;
And crumpling snow where'er we trod,
Reflected back the friendly ray.

Her breath, that met the piercing cold,
Quick vanish'd, and a tear was seen,
While thus her story Emma told
Of summer-days, how bless'd they'd been.

My father is too poor, to own
The mountain flock, or wandering kine;
One kid has all our fondness known,—
I call'd the blithsome creature mine.

Of kids that ever climb the steep,
With all the frisks of wanton glee,
Of all that graze the dell so deep,
The merriest of the race was he.

Without him if I stole away,
And gain'd the mountain's hairy brow,
He'd join me there, and seem'd to say,—
Look down upon our home below.

Light on the cliff he'd bound along,
Now climb aloft and now descend;
And while I sung my morning song,
Would circle round and round his friend.

When wild-rose buds began to peep
And June, amidst her choice of flowers,
Bade dripping clouds their distance keep,
And welcomed forth the sunny hours—

When fresh the earth, and clear the sky,
And blackbirds caroll'd through the grove ;
Both morn and eve my kid was nigh,
And I return'd him love for love.

And Allen, was he here e'en now,
He'd print the snow in scowering by,
And with *such strength*, that even you
Would wonder how he leap'd so high.

My *father's* loss had grieved me more ;
Then, poor indeed would Emma be.
But next to him—a bosom'd store
Was that poor innocent to me.

And nothing but a father's weal,
Should e'er have torn him from my side :
His life supply'd a sick man's meal,
Who else most surely must have died.

Forgive my tears—'twas sure a sin,
A crying sin, at Donald's door,—
A travelling pedlar had his skin,
And I shall never see him more !

Her eye uplifted, mild and blue,
Convey'd a more than usual bliss ;
While to my lips her cheek I drew,
And lurking echo, mock'd the kiss !

Oh soothe, sweet girl, thy troubled mind,
Though dear a short-lived kid might prove ;
To me, be you as true and kind,
You'll find a life of *lasting* love.

I've kids at home ; then come with me,
We're natives both of this sweet vale
And bring thy tenderness with thee,
But tell no more this piteous tale.—

Thou, and thy kid, no more can meet :
Yet his soft skin, that knew no stain,
On some fair lady's gliding feet
May visit these wild hills again.

Then let the thought thy bosom cheer ;
From trifles oft our comforts flow ;
And love can spread his blessings here,
As spring dissolves the mountain snow.

And will you then no more be sad?
And will you share my kids with me?
Shall spring, which makes Tweed's side so glad,
Shall spring have coming joys for thee?

Where are the flowers of bonny May?
We know the sun will bring them forth—
And can I trust thy pity? say,
For pity speaks the soul of worth.

"Yes, trust me, Allen; by this light—
"I'll hide my heart from thee no more."—
I won my Emma's love that night,—
Oh, love! respect our humble door.

While flowers burst forth, while leaves decay,
While crystal treasures, Tweed, rolls by,
Be thou the guardian of our way,
And bless our cottage till we die.

TO GENERAL LOYD.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE OLD ELMS AT THE WEST END OF WOOLWICH BARRACKS.

We soldiers of the western hill,
Turn'd up with nature's cheerful green;
Since our young stems came here to drill,
What revolutions have we seen!

We've witness'd many a gallant launch;
We've bow'd to many a gay review;
And still, we're like your honour—staunch;
And humbly plead our cause with you.

Oh! shall we be condemn'd to die,
Whilst your vast barracks raise our wonder;
Whose deep foundations come so nigh,
They cut our very roots asunder?

We've stood through many a stormy night,
Ay! long before your men were born,
Who braved the thunder of the fight,
And toils and terrors laugh'd to scorn,

How grateful is the summer shade,
How bleak this hill would look without us;
Here let the vows of love be made,
And blooming maids still flock about us.

Let us remain the spot to show,
(Though honour bids a nation arm),
Where grazing kine were wont to low,
And once was found a peaceful farm.

SONG.

SUNG BY MR. BLOOMFIELD

At the Anniversary of Dr. Jenner's Birth-day, 1803.

COME hither, mild Beauty, that dwell'st on the mountain,
Sweet handmaid of Liberty, meet us to-day;
Thy votaries philanthropy ask from thy fountain,
A soul-cheering nectar wherewith to be gay.

The cup may o'erflow, and new grapes still be growing;
The eyes of the drinkers resplendently shine;
But grant us, bright nymph, with thy gifts overflowing,
To lighten our hearts, and to relish our wine.

Is Beauty's gay rosebud a prize worth ensuring?
Its guardianship rests with the friends of our cause.
Shall we mark unconcern'd, what the blind are enduring?
No! mercy and peace are the first of our laws.

Wave, streamers of victory; be bravery requited;
Be sails, in all climes, still with honour unfurl'd;
All lovers of man with our cause are delighted;
'Tis to banish the fears, and the tears of the world.

All nations shall feel, and all nations inherit,
The wonderful blessing we place in their view;
And if in that blessing a mortal claims merit,
Oh! Jenner—your country resigns it to you!

From the field, from the farm, comes the glorious treasure,
May its life-saving impulse—all fresh as the morn—
Still spread round the earth without bounds, without measure,
Till Time has forgot, when his Jenner was born.

WORDS FOR HOOK'S FOURTH LESSON.

LOVELY SHELAH.

COME, lovely Shelah—come, lovely Shelah,
Let us ramble o'er the dewy mountains, Shelah.
Let blossoms please thee,
No cares shall tease thee,
Let us taste the breezy morn.

Da Capo.

There my songs I'll sing thee,
There the flowers I'll bring thee,
Larks shall carol cheerly,
There my songs I'll sing thee,
There the flowers I'll bring thee,
Down amongst the waving corn.

Da Capo first five lines.

FOR HOOK'S NINTH LESSON.

DONALD.

DOWN in the forest,
Where the hazel boughs are spreading,
Where the sun-beams gleaming play
Beneath our favourite tree.
Bring from thy cottage
Scrip and flask; and lightly treading,
Deck with flowers the mossy seat;
I'll share the feast with thee.
So said my Donald—
But where's my loitering lover?
Smiles wait him, flowers bloom
By woodland rill so clear.
Donald, be faithful,
My bold, my bonny forest rover;
What's the stream, and what the flowers,
If Donald is not here?

Peep from thy covert,
Noble antler'd stag, nor fear me.
List'ning here, enjoy thy food,
I spread no snare for thee.
Sing, lovely Philomel,
'Midst the shady branches near me,
Till my wand'ring lover comes,
Oh, tune thy lay to me.
Hark! from the deep dell
The mingled voices swelling;
Hark! what sweet echoes
Are through the forest borne.
Welcome, thou brave youth;
Welcome, sounds of rapture telling.
Charming echoes,
Here he comes!
'Twas Donald's bugle-horn.

FOR HOOK'S ELEVENTH LESSON.

THE IRISH DUCK-WOMAN.

THIS is the market for ducks to-day,
And prettier birds never swam in the water;
But what's to become of my gains, I pray,
If I'm to be cheated by you?
Show them your English lasses, and tell them
They ne'er had a conscience so cheaply to sell 'em now.
Match 'em for fat, and for weight, and for feather,
And match 'em the market all through.

Da Capo first four lines.

Who'd be cheated by you? who'd be cheated by you?
Match 'em for fat, and for weight, and for feather,
And match 'em the market all through.
Who'd be cheated by you? who'd be cheated by you?
Match 'em for fat, and for weight, and for feather,
And match 'em the market all through.
Sure, I'm not one of your Irish geese,
Who don't know a bit about what I'd be a'ter,
To sell my fat ducks for a shilling a-piece,
When I gave a dollar for two!

I who have sold 'em at Cork and Kilkenny,
And even at Dublin itself turn'd a penny, sure;
I who have sold 'em to lords and to ladies,
And travell'd the country through!

Da Capo first four lines.

Who'd be cheated by you? who'd be cheated by you?
I who have sold 'em, &c.
And travell'd, &c.
Who'd be cheated, &c.
I who have, &c.
And travell'd, &c.

Da Capo as before.

FOR HOOK'S FOURTEENTH LESSON.

THE SOLDIER'S LULLABY.

To sleep, my dear—to sleep, my dear;
The march is o'er—the fight is done.
To sleep, my dear, you need not fear,
You're safe,—the field is won.

Da Capo.

Rest your troubled bosom,
And rest your weary head;
Comrades watch around thee,
Thy husband guards thy bed.

Da Capo To sleep, &c.

No piercing trumpet shall tell of death and terrors,
No thundering cannon shall fill thee with dismay.

Da Capo To sleep, &c.

Broad the vanguard shows its front;
Our brave commander knows his ground;
And distant rolls the doubling drum;
The conquer'd foe is far away.

Da Capo To sleep, &c.

GLEE.

FROM THE VILLAGE DRAMA CALLED "HAZELWOOD-HALL."

1.

Love in a shower safe shelter took,
In a rosy bower, beside a brook,
And wink'd and nodded, with conscious pride,
To his vot'ries drench'd on the other side.
Come hither, sweet maids, there's a bridge below ;
The toll-keeper Hymen will let you through ;
Come over the stream to me.

2.

Then over they went, in a huddle together,
Not caring much about wind or weather ;
The bower was sweet, and the shower was gone,
Again broke forth th' enlivening sun.
Some wish'd to return, but the toll-keeper said,
You're a wife *now*, lassie, I *pass'd* you a maid.
Get back as you can for me.

SIMPLE PLEASURES.

FROM THE SAME.

1.

Thus thinks the traveller, journeying still
Where mountains rise sublime :
What, but these scenes, the heart can fill ?
What charm like yonder giant hill ?
—A mole-hill clothed with thyme !

2.

What can exceed the joy of power ?
—That joy which conquerors prove
In scepter'd rule, where all must cower ?
What can exceed that madd'ning hour ?
Why peace, and home, and love !

SONG.

TUNE.—LIGORAN COSH.

1.

THE man in the moon look'd down one night,
Where a lad and his lass were walking;
Thinks he, there must be very huge delight
In this kissing and nonsense-talking:
And so there must ('tis a well known case),
For it lasts both late and early.
So they talk'd him down, till he cover'd his face,
—They tired his patience fairly.

2.

Then up rose the sun in his morning beams,
And push'd back his nightcap to greet them;
Says he,—"As you boast of your darts and flames,
My darts and my flames shall meet them."
He scorch'd them both through the live-long day,
But they never once seem'd to mind him,
But laugh'd outright, as he skulk'd away,
And left a dark world behind him.

3.

Then the man in the moon look'd down in a pet,
And said, "I believe I can cure you;
Though my brother has fail'd, I may conquer yet –
If not, I must try to endure you.
Go home," he cried, "and attend to my rules,
And banish all thoughts of sorrow;
Then jump into bed, you couple of fools,
And you'll both be wiser to-morrow."

SENT TO MR. SHARP,

AS AN APOLOGY FOR NOT DINING WITH HIM.

I CANNOT with pleasure leave home,
Though wit, wine, and friendship invite,
For that grim-visaged fiend is just come,
Who withers my germs of delight.
With the insult of conquest he rides,
And demands from his peg my warm coat,
Deep-probing back, shoulders, and sides,
With a spur—like the *name* to your note.

The blithe Caledonian for once,
Whose humour will keep you from sinking,
Will miss by good fortune the dunce,
Who spends his dull moments in thinking.
Should Doeg transgress, show the door,
And let this fine rain cool his flame;
Or to have him like me, make him *poor*,
And strike out the *e* from his name.

ÆOLUS.

I am not disposed to court the powers of this poet-made god—except on a sultry summer's day, when not a breath of air is in motion; at such a moment one might exclaim:—

OH, breeze, where sleep'st thou? Come, oh come,
This languor of my frame dispel;
Arise,—thy own loved harp is dumb;
Arise, and bid thy chorus swell.

Stop not, but breathe with fresh'ning power
O'er full-blown roses in your way;
Wave the laburnum's pendent flower;—
Yet stop not 'midst their sweets to play.

Sweep o'er the hay-field and the grove;
Thy own harp waits thee, come along;
Whose soft vibrations whisper love,
And fancied choirs of heavenly song.

Thanks, charming zephyr.—Hark! That tone!
Be true, sweet harp; hush all but thee;
Perform thy task untouch'd, alone,
And pour thy tide of harmony.

IRISH NEWS.

TUNE—THE YORKSHIREMAN.

"By't side of a brig stands over a brook."

FROM Dublin, ahoi! full of wonder and gazing,
I'm writing to you, brother Pat;
I've heard of a story so strange and amazing,
I'll talk about nothing but that:
I've heard of that queer little peaceable pimple,
That makes in the word such a row!
You might think all the doctors are crazy, or simple,
For they're all fell in love with the cow.

John Bull, though he holds us so tight in his tether,
Determined to give us relief.—
So he sends us this pimple, and Bedford together,
—A glorious fellow for beef!—
And sure, of that Fiend who makes holes in our faces,
He swears he can rid us all now;
So the sweet little milk-maids, are sure of their graces,
And the farmer's in love with the cow.

In lectures galvanic, the world in a panic,
Beheld an ox-cheek twist about;
With frogs set a crawling, and rabbits a squalling,
And sheep's heads that turn'd up the snout.
But what is all that, by my soul, brother Pat,
To the news that I'm telling you now?
New lectures are teaching, and parsons are preaching,
Ay, the parson's in love with the cow.

I'll tell you, moreover, how good neighbour Bull,
The scheme has so charmingly plann'd;
That by hook or by crook, he has got in his book,
The biggest great names in the land.
Yet some write and rave, that the pimple won't save,
And they prove it, I can't tell you how:
But while time lays *them* flat, let's remember, dear Pat,
That the world is in love with the cow.

'Then what will we do, brother Pat, with the man
Who found out this glorious rig?
Sure, we'll gather him shamrocks as fast as we can,
And stick full every curl in his wig.
And may *Unanimity, Concord,* and *Joy,*
To the end of the world, from just now,
Distinguish *Humanity's heroes,* my boy!
—Long life to John Bull and his cow!

YIELD THEE TO PLEASURE, OLD CARE.

YIELD thee to pleasure, old Care;
Hope—let me rejoice in thy truth;
Leave me, pale sickness; forbear,
And steal not the rose of my youth.

Spring; with thy charms, prithee come,
I long for thy bright sunny hours;
Clothe the steep woods round my home;
And bid me revive with thy flowers.

Borne on the fresh blowing breeze,
The respite of Heaven descends.
Joy; thy white hand let me seize;
I live for my father and friends.

SONG.

NORAH.

1.

BY the Bannow's meandering stream,
By the green banks of Shannon I've stray'd;
I've bless'd the soft glance, as it came,
Of many a beautiful maid.
My heart throbb'd a moment, I own,
The transport was o'er in a day;
But where's all my fortitude flown?
By Norah 'tis melted away.

2.

I ascended the mountain with glee;
'Midst the flowers of the valley could rove;
All Ireland was charming to me,
Till I knew the sweet thraldom of love.
Yet what can such feelings impart,
Or what for such raptures can pay?
Love conquers the pride of my heart,
By Norah 'tis melted away.

SENT TO A LADY WHO WAS GOING TO A BALL.

May health brace your nerves, as I find you're for gadding,
And Care drop the end of his tether,
And stately dame Conscience give license for madding,
And toss up your heart like a feather.

My heart, my good lady, to mirth is no foe,
And many the joys which it feels;
My heart—why it danced thirty summers ago,
But I never could dance with my heels.

NEWS FROM WORTHING.

IN A LETTER FROM A BEAST OF BURDEN TO HER BROTHER JACK.

Brother Jack, I am going to inform you
Of things that ne'er enter'd your head;
And I hope the narration will charm you
Wherever you're driven or led;

For it grieves me to think of your Hampers,
And the cudgel that thumps you behind;
You have none of my frolics and scampers;
—My labour's as light as the wind.

On a fine level, form'd by the tide,
The beach and the ocean between,
Fashion here, tells young lasses to *ride*
On the best *walk*, that ever was seen.

The *sands*, brother Jack ; that's the spot
Where the ladies exhibit their graces ;
—There they push me along till I trot,
Midst a circle of giggling faces.

Not one of the party stands idle,
For, when I move just like a snail,
One half of them pull at my bridle,
And t'other half push at my tail.

Then up, full of frolic and glee,
One will mount, and will scold, and will strike,
And ride me knee deep in the sea,
Where I stop—just as long as I like.

For what are their tricks and manœuvres ?
They may pull me, and haul me, and tease ;
But I plague them as they plague their lovers,
O, I like to do just as I please !

Don't envy, but hark what I tell—
You, would never do here for a *prude*,
Because, Jack, you know very well,
You were always inclined to be rude ;

And if you should set up your braying,
And give them but two or three staves,
You would stop all the children from playing,
Or frighten them into the waves !

Sometimes a sick lady will ride me,
More tender and delicate still ;
And employ a poor boy just to guide me,
Where I cannot go wrong if I will ;

Then back through the town gently creeping,
We stop at some library door ;
Where, nonsense preferring to sleeping,
She loads me with novels[1] a score.

And, dear Jack, by the by, I've long guest,
Though, good ladies, I've no wish to spite 'em ;
That 'tis *we* bring these books in request,
And that some of *our family* write 'em.

(1) Every reader will surely know *what kind* of novels are here alluded to; and, at the same time, truth obliges me to say, that I received personal attentions from Mrs. Spooner, of the Colonnade Library, which I remember with gratitude.—R. B.

But who'd go to boast about that ?
No, I'll finish by telling you true,
That at Worthing we all might grow fat,
And keep the best company too.

So love to you, Jack, till next season ;
I'll be happy as long as I can ;
For an ass that complains without reason,
Becomes——just as bad as a man !

ADDRESS TO THE BRITISH CHANNEL.

Roll, roll thy white waves, and envelop'd in foam
Pour thy tides round the echoing shore,
Thou guard of Old England ; my country, my home ;
And my soul shall rejoice in the roar.

Though high-fronted valour may scowl at the foe,
And with eyes of defiance advance ;
'Tis thou hast repell'd desolation and woe,
And the conquering legions of France.

'Tis good to exult in the strength of the land ;
That the flower of her youth are in arms ;
That her lightning is pointed, her jav'lin in hand,
And aroused the rough spirit that warms :

But never may that day of horror be known,
When these hills, and these valleys shall feel
The rush of the phalanx by phalanx o'erthrown,
And the bound of the thundering wheel.

The dread chance of battle, its blood, and its roar,
Who can wish in his senses to prove ?
To plant the foul fiend on Britannia's own shore,
All sacred to peace and to love ?

Hail, glory of Albion ! ye fleets, and ye hosts,
I breathe not the tones of dismay ;
In valour unquestion'd still cover your coasts,
But may Heav'n keep the slaughter away !

[A young man occasionally called upon me who was born deaf and dumb, and who had been educated at the Asylum in the Grange Road. They had taught him to make shoes, to write, and to speak a few words; and the last time he called, he announced his intended marriage in the following words:

"FIVE MONTHS I WILL GETTING SHE MARRIED."]

O HOW can the dumb go a courting,
Or how can the maiden approve?
'Tis easy; while fancy is sporting;
—The eyes, speak the language of love.

Poor youth! although born without hearing,
Benevolence cheers such as you,
And teaches the words most endearing—
"God bless you," and "How do you do?"

From these, and the use of your pen;
Though in grammar you're not over nice;
Love, can make out your where and your when,
And supply all defects in a trice.

And though you hear not the soft sigh
Of delight, when you press on her cheek;
That loss other joys shall supply;
E'en the turn of a finger can speak.

We all deal in nodding and winking,
And talk through a smile or a frown;
But you, on whatever you're thinking,
Have a strange set of nods of your own.

This credit of nodding we grant you;
—But all former specimens prove
That nothing could ever enchant you,
Or light up your features like love.

For who shall describe the wild glee
That dwelt on your brow while you tarried,
O'er that pen, which recorded so free,
"Five months I will getting she married."

Perhaps she will study your face,
And read all your meanings with ease,
And prove that affection's pure grace,
In despite of all language can please.

The balance is much on your side—
Should she scold, why who better can bear it?
You may see a child's mouth open wide
When it cries,—but you never can hear it.

If your heart bound with pleasure, or bleeds;
Should fortune prove friendly or shy;
No oaths, in your book of misdeeds,
Will stare in your face when you die.

You're right thus to marry, methinks,
While young; though the wise ones have tarried;
For me, I'll remember your winks,
And, "Five months I will getting she married."

A NEIGHBOURLY RESOLUTION.

With scythe, fresh sharpen'd, by his side,
To bring the ripen'd barley down,
One morning, when the dew was dried,
Thus musing with himself, John Brown
Stood, where of late
His little gate
Was cover'd by an elm's broad shade:—
Ah! there thou liest, wide sheltering tree,
Beneath whose boughs, in youthful glee,
My first love-vow was made.

Thou hast survived my wife, 'tis true,
Thy leaves have sigh'd to me, alone;
Have sigh'd in autumn's yellow hue—
I've felt thy lessons, every one.
Of thee bereft,
There may be left,
(Though 'twas no friend that cut thee down)
There may be left in store, I say,
Some joys—for Goody Gascoin may
Be kind to neighbour Brown.

I've lived alone, she's done the same,
Through summer's heat and winter's cold;
I trust we still might feel love's flame,
Though girls and boys may call us old:
O could we be
Embower'd by thee!
Vain wish! my poor old elm is down:—
May shadeless labour and sour ale,
Far from this stream, and this sweet vale,
Plague him that robb'd John Brown.

But though, 'midst clust'ring leaves, no more
The robin gives his morning trill;
Winter may bring him to my door,
And Goody Gascoin,—*if she will.*
I'll know her mind;
If so inclined,
'Tis death alone shall make us part:
And though his cot's sweet shade is down,
This charm she'll find in neighbour Brown,
Gay cheerfulness of heart.

A FIRST VIEW OF THE SEA.

ARE these the famed, the brave South Downs,
That like a chain of pearls appear?
Their pale green sides and graceful crowns;
To freedom, thought, and peace, how dear!
—To freedom, for no fence is seen;
To thought, for silence soothes the way;
To peace, for o'er the boundless green
Unnumber'd flocks and shepherds stray.

Now, now we've gain'd the utmost height!
Where shall we match the vale below?
The Weald of Sussex, glorious sight
Old Chankbury, from thy tufted brow;
Oaks, British oaks, form all its shade,
Dark as a forest's ample crown;
Yet by rich herds how cheerful made,
And countless spots of harvest brown.

But what 's yon southward, dark, blue, line
Along the horizon's utmost bound;
On which the weary clouds recline,
Still varying half the circle round?
The sea! the sea! my GOD! the sea!
Yon sunbeams on its bosom play!
With milk-white sails expanded free,
There ploughs the bark her cheerful way!

I come, I come, my heart beats high;
The green sward stretches southward still;
Soft in the breeze the heath-bells sigh;
Up, up we scale another hill.
A spot where once the eagle tower'd
O'er Albion's green primæval charms,
And where the harmless wild-thyme flower'd,
Did Rome's proud legions pile their arms.

And here old Sissa, so they tell,
The Saxon monarch, closed his days:
I judge they play'd their parts right well,
But cannot stop to sing their praise.
For yonder, near the ocean's brim,
I see; I taste the coming joy;
There Mary binds the wither'd limb;
The mother tends the poor lame boy.

My heart is there—sleep, Romans, sleep;
And what are Saxon kings to me?
Let me, O thou majestic deep!
Let me descend to love and thee:
And may thy calm, fair-flowing tides,
Bring peace and hope, and bid them live,
And night, whilst wandering by thy side,
Teach wisdom—teach me to forgive.

Then, when my heart is whole again,
And Fancy's renovated wing
Sweeps o'er the terrors of thy reign;
Strong on my soul those terrors bring.
In infant haunts I 've dream'd of thee;
And where the crystal brook ran by,
Mark'd sands, and waves, and open sea,
And gazed—but with an infant's eye.

'Twas joy to pass the stormy hour
In groves, when childhood knew no more;
Increase that joy, tremendous Power,
Loud let thy world of waters roar!
And if the scene reflection drowns,
Or draws too often rapture's tear,
I'll stroll me o'er these lovely downs,
And press the turf, and worship here.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS INFANT SON ROBERT.

FAREWELL! my sweet, my budding flower,
My rosy cherub-boy, farewell!
My tortures at thy dying hour,
Thy guardian-angels best can tell!
O, blessings on thee, spotless spirit!
Thy smile was almost heaven to me!
Though still life's troubles I inherit,
Like David, I SHALL GO TO THEE!

POETICAL TRIBUTES

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

EPISTLE

From Roger Coulter, of Dorsetshire, to his friend Giles Bloomfield, the Suffolk Farmer's Boy.

VRIEND GILES,

WHEN vust I heard thy tunevul voice,
I stood ameaz'd, an' star'd, and gap'd awoy:—
That can't be Stephen, Ned, nor Hodge, I cried;
When zome oone zaid—"why, that's the Zuffolk Buoy."
An' presently the nightingeale begun,
Linnards an' gooldvinges, wi' envious droats,[1]
An' e'en the magpye an' the chatt'ring jea,[2]
Meade the thick copses echo wi' their notes;
The very cows vorgot to chaw the quid;[3]
The sheep stopt nibbling, an' glaw'd[4] aall aroun';
The children ploying at the barkon-geate,[5]
Stood pleas'd, and hearken'd to the mellow zoun.
I sometimes bit my lips wi' very spite,
To thenk a stranger Buoy shou'd zing zoo well,
That Dooset[6] shou'd produce thich stupid louts,
To let a Zuffolk clown bear off the bell—
That dukes an' loordes shou'd coourt his company.
An' ladies too, for hobnail'd Giles shou'd zend,
To clouter o'er their parlor vlours—alack!—
But thic' good measter—what d'ye caall's[7]—his friend.

(1) Throats. (2) Jay. (3) Chew the cud. (4) Stared.
(5) Barton Gate. (6) Dorset. (7) Capell Lofft.

An' then agen, wi' ready ears I ston,
An' long bout Ixwo'th's poor mad moid to hear,
Thy disappointments at the clod-wall'd hut,
An' in the moon-sheen leane thy nashion vear.
With aall thy wit, thou canst not teach thy art—
Else, if I know'd that sich a theng cou'd be,
I'd drow off sheame (I ben't as yet too wold)
An', Giles, I'd come an' learne to zing o' thee.

Thine, &c.

ROGER COULTER.

[The following verses were written and presented to Mr. Bloomfield by a journeyman carpenter,—name unknown.]

TO MR. R. BLOOMFIELD,

Author of the Farmer's Boy, Songs, Ballads, &c.

DEAR Bloomfield, I have read, with secret joy,
Your Songs and Ballads, and your Farmer's Boy,
And mark'd their beauties too,
That shine like gold divested of alloy,
Or gems of brightest hue.

But ere I try to make my raptures known,
Or call the Muses from their radiant throne
My bosom to inspire;
With grateful heart I cheerfully will own
What friendship might require.

Then know, sweet Bard, when first the voice of Fame
Convey'd to me your merits and your name,
A female bore the tale;
Thy Songs and Ballads, she did loud proclaim,
To please me could not fail.

I caught thy sweets from her unclouded taste,
Herself so sweet, so simple, and so chaste,
I could not doubt thy power;
I ran to purchase, and with eager haste
Survey'd thy beauties o'er.

Ye powers of fancy, guide my roving pen,
To mark the ecstasies unknown till then,
That did my soul pervade!
Enrapt in wonder, soaring out of ken,
I read thy "Miller's Maid!"

Entranced a while in such ecstatic bliss,
My feeling heart to feeling was remiss,
My joys were scarcely mine;
Let rapture paint, for words can ne'er express,
Such ecstasy divine!

Less transport swell'd the youthful hero's breast,
When high enthroned at Persia's royal feast,
Timotheus, with his lyre,
Or shook his frame, or soothed his soul to rest,
Or kindled soft desire!

When Thais, lovely as the op'ning rose,
Did by his side her full blown charms disclose,
And music, love, and wine,
To yield him pleasure, and subdue his foes,
Did all at once combine!

My joys were of a more substantial kind
Than those that fired the mighty hero's mind,
And far more lasting too;
For those get stale, however close combined,
But mine are ever new.

And like the joys from virtuous acts that flow!
And like the joys that heighten friendship's glow!
And like the joys of heaven!
Such joy, O Bloomfield! I would have thee know,
Thy works to me have given!

I feel the powers of thy resistless lyre
Transport my heart, and set my soul on fire!
And rising into flame;
I read, I mark, I wonder, and admire,
Till rapture shakes my frame!

Some grov'ling souls, who live but to degrade
The powers of nature, and the fost'ring aid
Of pity's mildest beam,
May doubt the feelings that my heart pervade
And say 'tis all a dream.

If 'tis a dream, O may I ne'er awake!
May night's thick glooms the twilight overtake!
O'erwhelm the rising sun!
No demon-spell the midnight silence break,
But Morpheus reign alone!

Then not for you, ye callous, grov'ling crew,
But for the tender sympathetic few
Who love the "Farmer's Boy,"
Do I my wakeful rhapsodies renew,
And string the harp of joy.

A thousand beauties meet harmonious here!
Ten thousand graces in their train appear!
And emulous combine,
With heav'nly sounds, to meet the ravish'd ear,
And stamp the whole divine!

To name the beauties of thy varied lays,
And give to each an ample share of praise,
Thy ev'ry thought to scan,
And crown thy head with never-fading bays,
Would far exceed my plan:

Exceed my plan, but not my wish, I own,—
For could I stedfast at the Muse's throne
Erect my standard high,
My dauntless prowess I would still make known,
And ev'ry foe defy.

I'd clear the way for Bloomfield's tow'ring fame;
I'd make the skies reverberate his name!
Terrestrial space should ring!
Till joy itself should kindle into flame,
And ev'ry voice should sing!

Till every harp should instantly be strung,
And every flute that carelessly had hung
On willow, birch, or briar,
Should be resumed, and symphonies unsung,
Should every bosom fire;

But, O sweet Bard! since Nature has denied
Those powers to me that in thy breast reside,
Expect no farther aid;
But in thy own unrivall'd powers confide,
Nor ever be afraid.

For Malice, Envy, Scorn itself shall die,
And every foe, of low estate or high,
Fall prostrate at thy feet,
Whilst thou shalt live, and, vaulting to the sky,
Resume thy native seat!

Yet well I know in language more profuse
I might portray thy elevated views,
Did Fancy hold the rein;
But this shy goddess quits my humble muse,
And all my art is vain.

Thus hush'd to silence, pensive I resign
The homely wreath I labour'd to entwine,
And lay it at thy feet,
In hopes some more seraphic muse than mine
May render it complete.

And on thy head, with sweet ideal grace,
The deathless token of thy merit place,
And loud resound thy name;
Till conscious Earth, throughout her ample space,
Shall echo with the same.

Yet one loved name may necessary seem,
Before I quit the soul-enliv'ning theme,
May Fame resound it oft,
And num'rous lays with num'rous plaudits teem
To thy great patron, Lofft!

Whose taste, whose judgment, whose exalted worth
Were lent to call thy latent beauties forth,
And hold them up to fame;
Whose taste, whose judgment gave a noble birth
To thy plebeian name.

O could I mount on eagle-pinions high,
I 'd mark his worth with letters on the sky,
Indelible and clear!
Such as might catch the sympathetic eye,
To love and friendship dear.

But stop, my muse, thy rhapsodies restrain,
Thy rambling impulse is but weak and vain,
His fame transcends thy lays;
And hills and dales, while sense and worth remain,
Will echo with his praise!

And still where Bloomfield's deathless name is known
His gen'rous patron's every tongue shall own ;
And praise without alloy
Shall still ascend to Friendship's azure throne,
In thrilling notes of joy !

Till Friendship, Love, and Sympathy divine,
And soft-eyed Pity, shedding tears benign,
The world no more shall sever ;
But Lofft's great name with honor'd Bloomfield's join
In closest ties for ever !

So now farewell, thou chaste mellifluous Bard,
May adverse fortune never more retard
Thy genius so excelling—
But Fame extol, and merit meet reward,
And Peace surround thy dwelling.

And may the partner of thy honest cares,
And every pledge of love thy name that bears,
Be found at once possessing
The virtues that the husband, father, shares,
And every earthly blessing ;

Till days and years shall mete to them and thee
The longest bliss that mortals here can see ;
Till influence supernal
Shall waft your souls from joys of low degree
To life and joys eternal !

IMPROMPTU,

On seeing "Flowerdew's Poems" upon the same shelf with the "Farmer's Boy," at Bloomfield's Cottage.

BY T. PARK, ESQ.

THOUGH scant be the poet's domain,
Most ample, I know, is his mind;
The applauses of all he can gain,
His applauses to none are confined:
Hence even his book-stored retreat
This liberal thought seems to yield—
That the *dew* on a *flower* may be sweet,
Though it match not the *bloom* of a *field*.

VERSES TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

From Blackwood's Magazine for Sept. 1823.

> Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,
> His daily teachers had been woods and rills;
> The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The sleep that is among the lonely hills.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

SWEET, simple poet, thou art gone!
And shall no parting tear be shed,
By those to whom thy name was known,
Above thy low and lonely bed?
Shall not a pilgrim, lingering by,
Gaze on thy turf, and heave a sigh?

Yes! many, many! for thy heart
Was humble as the violet low,
That, shelter'd in some shady part,
We only by its perfume know;
Yet genius pure, which God had given,
Shone o'er thy path a light from heaven!

'Mid poverty it cheer'd thy lot,
'Mid darkness it illumed thine eyes,
And shed, on earth's most dreary spot,
A glory borrow'd from the skies;
Thine were the shows of earth and air,
Of winter dark and summer fair.

Before thee spread was Nature's book,
And with a bard's enraptured glance,
By thee were seen, in glen and brook,
A limitless inheritance:
Thy ripening boyhood look'd abroad,
And saw how grand was man's abode.

Expanding with thine added days,
Thy feelings ripen'd and refined,
Though none were near thy views to raise,
Or train to fruit the budding mind:
As grows the flower amid the wild,
Such was thy fortune—Nature's child!

No pompous learning—no parade
Of pedantry, and cumbrous lore,
On thy elastic bosom weigh'd;
Instead, were thine a mazy store
Of feelings delicately wrought,
And treasures glean'd by silent thought.

Obscurity, and low-born care,
Labour, and want—all adverse things,
Combined to bow thee to despair;
And of her young untutor'd wings
To rob thy genius.—'Twas in vain:
With one proud soar she burst her chain!

The beauties of the budding spring;
The glories of the summer's reign;
The russet autumn, triumphing
In ripen'd fruits and golden grain;
Winter, with storms around his shrine,
Each, in their turn, were themes of thine,

And lowly life, the peasant's lot,
Its humble hopes and simple joys;
By mountain-stream the shepherd's cot,
And what the rustic hour employs;
White flocks on Nature's carpet spread;
Birds blithely caroling o'er head;

These were thy themes, and thou wert bless'd—
Yea, bless'd beyond the wealth of kings.—
Calm joy is seated in the breast
Of the rapt poet as he sings,
And all that Truth or Hope can bring
Of Beauty, gilds the Muse's wing.

And, Bloomfield, thine were blissful days
(If flowers of bliss may thrive on earth);
Thine were the glory and the praise
Of genius, link'd with modest worth;
To wisdom wed, remote from strife,
Calmly pass'd o'er thy stormless life.

And thou art dead!—no more, no more
To charm the land with sylvan strain!
Thy harp is hush'd, thy song is o'er,
But what is sung shall long remain,
When cold his hand, and lost this verse,
Now hung in reverence on thy hearse!

ON THE DEATH OF BLOOMFIELD,

The Suffolk Poet.

BY BERNARD BARTON.

THOU shouldst not to the grave descend
Unmourn'd, unhonour'd, or unsung;—
Could harp of mine record thy end,
For thee that rude harp should be strung;—
And plaintive sounds as ever rung
Should all its simple notes employ,
Lamenting unto old and young
The Bard who sang THE FARMER'S BOY.

Could Eastern Anglia boast a lyre
Like that which gave thee modest fame,
How justly might its every wire
Thy minstrel honours loud proclaim:
And many a stream of humble name,
And village-green, and common wild,
Should witness tears that knew not shame,
By Nature won from Nature's child.

The merry *Horkey's* passing cup
Should pause—when that sad note was heard;
The *Widow* turn *her hour-glass* up,
With tenderest feelings newly stirr'd;
And many a pity-waken'd word,
And sighs that speak when language fails,
Should prove thy simple strains preferr'd
To prouder poet's lofty tales.

Circling the *old oak table* round,
Whose moral worth thy measure owns,
Heroes and heroines yet are found
Like *Abner* and the *Widow Jones*;—
There *Gilbert Meldrum's* sterner tones
In Virtue's cause are bold and free;
And e'en the patient suff'rer's moans,
In pain and sorrow—plead for thee.

Nor thus beneath the straw-roofed cot
Alone should thoughts of thee pervade
Hearts which confess thee unforgot,
On heathy hill, in grassy glade;
In many a spot by thee array'd
With hues of thought, with fancy's gleam,
Thy memory lives!—in *Euston's* shade,
By *Barnham Water's* shadeless stream!

And long may guileless hearts preserve
Thy memory, and its tablets be:
While Nature's healthful feelings nerve
The arm of labour toiling free;
While Childhood's innocence and glee
With green Old Age enjoyment share;—
Richards and *Kates* shall tell of thee,
Walters and *James* thy name declare.

On themes like these, if yet there breathed
A Doric Lay so sweet as thine,
Might artless flowers of verse be wreathed
Around thy modest name to twine:
And though nor lute nor lyre be mine
To bid thy minstrel honours live,
The praise my numbers can assign
It still is soothing thus to give.

There needs, in truth, no lofty lyre
To yield thy Muse her homage due;
The praise her loveliest charms inspire
Should be as artless, simple too;
Her eulogist should keep in view
Thy meek and unassuming worth,
And inspiration should renew
At springs which gave thine own its birth.

Those springs may boast no classic name
To win the smile of letter'd pride,
Yet is their noblest charm the same
As that by *Castaly* supplied;
From *Aganippe*'s crystal tide
No brighter, fairer waves can start,
Than Nature's quiet teachings guide
From Feeling's fountain o'er the heart.

'Tis to THE HEART Song's noblest power—
Taste's purest precepts must refer;
And *Nature*'s *tact*, not *Art*'s proud dower,
Remains its best interpreter:
He who shall trust, without demur,
What his own better feelings teach,
Although unlearn'd shall seldom err,
But to the hearts of others reach.

It is not quaint and local terms
Besprinkled o'er thy rustic lay,
Though well such dialect confirms
Its power unletter'd minds to sway;
It is not these that most display
Thy sweetest charms, thy gentlest thrall,—
Words, phrases, fashions, pass away,
But TRUTH and NATURE live through all.

These, these have given thy rustic lyre
Its truest and its tenderest spell;
These amid Britain's tuneful choir
Shall give thy honour'd name to dwell:
And when Death's shadowy curtain fell
Upon thy toilsome earthly lot,
With grateful joy thy heart might swell
To feel that these reproach'd thee not.

How wise, how noble, was thy choice
To be the Bard of simple swains,—
In all their pleasures to rejoice,
And soothe with sympathy their pains ;
To paint with feeling in thy strains
The themes their thoughts and tongues discuss.
And be, though free from classic chains,
Our own more chaste Theocritus.

For this should Suffolk proudly own
Her grateful and her lasting debt ;—
How much more proudly—had she known
That pining care and keen regret,—
Thoughts which the fever'd spirits fret,
And slow disease,—'twas thine to bear ;—
And, ere thy sun of life was set,
Had won her poet's grateful prayer.

'Tis NOW TOO LATE ! the scene is closed,
Thy conflicts borne—thy trials o'er ;—
And in the peaceful grave reposed
That frame which pain shall rack no more :—
Peace to the Bard whose artless store
Was spread for Nature's humblest child ;
Whose song, well meet for peasant lore,
Was lowly, simple, undefiled.

Yet long may guileless hearts preserve
The memory of thy Verse, and thee :—
While Nature's healthful feelings nerve
The arm of labour toiling free,
While SUFFOLK PEASANTRY may be
Such as thy sweetest tales make known,—
By cottage-hearth, by greenwood tree,
Be BLOOMFIELD call'd, with pride, *their own !*

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ULEY is situated in rather a singular valley, about seven miles from the Severn. It appears to be surrounded by abrupt and woody hills, except on the north; where a bold promontory, with an old camp on its brow, called the "Bury," lifts its bald head, and whose sides, yielding plenty of stone for building, are extremely steep. Yet they are not hills, but merely the terminations of the upland country of Gloucestershire, termed the "Cotswold Levels;" and here they break suddenly into the vale of the Severn: and the valley of Uley is sunk, so as to be approached by a stranger without the smallest suspicion of there being a valley before him. Cotswold is an immense Gloucester cheese, and Uley Valley is a half-pound notch cut in his side.

The town of Dursley lies in the opening of the same valley, towards the Severn, and immediately under Stinchcomb Hill, one of the most remarkable of these bluff points, as standing majestically forward into the vale of Severn, and consequently commanding a very extensive view in all directions, particularly down the stream, over King-wood, Bristol, the mouth of the Wye, the Monmouthshire and Black Mountains, the Forest of Dean, May Hill, Malvern Hills in Worcestershire, and the city of Gloucester, &c. Both Dursley and Uley are employed in the manufacture of broadcloth,

and was I to abuse their steam-engines, that fill so delightful a valley with smoke, they would probably begin reminding me of my coat, and not unlikely of the time when I was hampered to get one!

The village of Owlpen stands under the hanging woods at the top of Uley Vale; it is very small, and near its curious and obscure church runs the little rill,[1] with several natural cascades (the first I had ever seen), which, in its further progress, becomes of such importance to the clothiers. The Curate of Uley preaches here once a fortnight, and he lately ran the hazard of his life by the falling of the sounding-board, which struck him a violent blow on the head. The country immediately round this valley on the high ground, is every where intersected by stone walls; for stone, a brick thickness, more or less, is the invariable consequence of digging ten inches into the ground; they are merely piled, without mortar, easily made, and as easily mended: a strange desolate appearance! In the valley there is no such thing, the verdure is of the most vivid green, and the uneven boundary of woods on the almost perpendicular sides of the high grounds, form the finest amphitheatre I have ever seen; but hold! I am going down the Wye.

Berkeley Castle, distant five miles, lies in sight from the heights; but I cannot reach it at present in any of my expeditions, but have frequently thought of Gray and the

"Shrieks of an agonizing King."

From Dursley[2] to the Severn side at Framelode, the lowlands fall with a slow, gradual descent. The passage-house is finely situated, and the boats are fitted up for the conveying horses and carriages across the stream. The water of the Severn is here but narrow, but owing to the occasional tides of uncommon height, the sands

(1) At Dursley is a spring near the course of this stream, which turns a mill at the distance of fifty yards from its issuing from the ground.
(2) Left Dursley at ten in the morning, August 17th.

are extensive. The current is rapid. Barrow Hill is a charming spot, rising in the neck of a horseshoe formed by the Severn, and giving a great command of the country. Here we found plentifully the petrified shell of the Nautilus; and pebbles, which in the neighbourhood of Uley are not seen, nor the least appearance of chalk or flint. Horses, I observed, appear to be struck with a kind of tremulous submission on finding themselves floating; one barge carried the seven; but to float each sociable, two barges were lashed side by side, and the carriage placed across upon planks. One boat of course carried all the party; and we were soon all on terra-firma again, and climbing the high ground, leaving May Hill on our right, passed Flaxley Abbey, the seat of Sir Thomas Crawley. The woods on this estate are chiefly oak, of good growth, and covering the side hills in a manner truly sublime.

The road leads on by Gun's Mills, and to Mitchel Dean, situated in a most beautiful country, and whose church has a spire of uncommon height; and so slender as to make one tremble for the builder. Yet on entering the place, it keeps no promises made at a distance, but is the oldest town (in appearance) that can be imagined; singularly unpleasing to the eye. Here I observed a stone cross, almost perfect, having an upright stone, on which an image was formerly placed.

During the ride from hence to Ross, had two or three peeps at the Malvern Hills, in Worcestershire, and the "Skirit" and "Sugar-loaf" in Monmouthshire.

"Bailey's Side" is a fine bold eminence on the left, clothed with wood, with a range or stratum of rock breaking through it, and forming a curious contrast with the green above and below. Penyard Hill, in the neighbourhood of Ross, is nearly of the same description, but is on every side covered with steep woods, so that they assert, that no sparrows were ever known on the farm on its brow; this I think possible, as the sparrow is so entirely domestic, and avoids woods in

general; and in this case his flight would be unusually long, and almost perpendicular.

Arrived at Ross at seven in the evening. Ross is not a town to my fancy, in appearance; perhaps it is the prevalence of rock, and of rock-stone, in their buildings, that gives it a kind of dreary look, to one unused to such buildings. The church, with its taper spire, stands on elevated ground, and from it is a view of the river Wye, winding eel-fashion, below; many of the elms planted by "Kyrle," Pope's "Man of Ross," are growing in the churchyard and neighbourhood. The ruins of Wilton Castle are seen across the stream in the opposite meadows; and a man in the churchyard very seriously informed us, that "the said castle was knocked down by *cannon* in a great rebellion in the time of the *Romans!*"

During my short stay at Ross, I called on an old acquaintance and fellow-tradesman, whom I had not seen for eleven years; he keeps a shoemaker's shop, opposite the Swan Inn, where we lodged. Left Ross at eight in the morning, 18th.

Assembled to the number of ten on board a pleasure-boat, stored with provisions, and bottles, &c. &c.; the sociables having been ordered forward to meet us at Monmouth and Chepstow.[1] But how shall I attempt to describe the natural beauties of this charming river, or the objects seen during the passage? I must not attempt it: a journal is not a vehicle of sufficient importance. My heart is brimful of indescribable pleasure when I think on this day. Beauty in all its variety is perhaps its leading feature; but sublimity is paramount to all considerations at the passage under Coldwell rocks,[2] and round to New Weir and Great

(1) Spent an hour on shore at Goodrich Castle. Pollett, the boat-man, informed me that he had often bought good cider for sixpence per gallon, and expected it as cheap this season.

(2) "Hail! Coldwell rocks; frown, frown away;
Thrust from your woods your shafts of grey:
Fall not, to crush our mortal pride,
Or stop the stream on which we glide.

Doward, and thence on to Monmouth. Everybody knows that the Wye is exceedingly deep in places, and falls beautifully in others over ledges of rocks, so as to form, not cascades, but rapids, where the water hurries along with a *visible* descent; it is winding in its course to a great degree, inconceivably pellucid; and in general, the hills rise majestically steep from its shores.

We dined on board the boat, on the right bank of the stream, near the spring called Coldwell; and here is a new-erected monument in memory of a youth drowned here, in sight of his parents. The inscription is long and excellent.[1] Permission for its erection was granted by Mr. Vaughan of Monmouth, the owner of the land; and though, for several reasons, I could individually wish the monument *not there*, I think it does honour to him to grant it. And though, as "the Lord of Courtfield," I have condemned his *taste*, I know nothing disrespectful of his heart.

Coldwell rocks, on the Gloucester side of the stream, are particularly grand and impressive; and the circumstance of having one of them baptized with *my name*, by the company, was agreeable to me.

Our lives are short, our joys are few:
But, giants, what is time to you?
Ye who erect, in many a mass,
Rise from the scarcely dimpled glass,
That with distinct and mellow glow
Reflects your monstrous forms below;
Or in clear shoals, in breeze or sun,
Shakes all your shadows into one;
Boast ye o'er man in proud disdain,
A silent, everlasting reign?
Bear ye your heads so high in scorn
Of *names* that puny man hath borne?
Proud rocks! had Cambria's bards but here
Their names engraven, deep and clear,
That such as gaily wind along
Might greet with shouts those sires of song,
And trace the fame that mortals crave
To Light and Life beyond the grave!
Then might ye boast your *wreaths* entwined
With trophies of the deathless Mind;
Then would your fronts record on high,
'*We* perish!—MAN can never die!'"

The Banks of Wye.

(1) See Banks of Wye.

At the neck of a long horseshoe formed by this river, the rocky eminence called "Symmons' Yat" obtrudes itself to a vast height, between the two points of the approach of the river. Instead of going round with the boat, it is usual for the party to ascend the rocks (where a ridge terminates in a high bank of perpendicular rock, not more than twenty yards wide), and to join the boat again at New Weir. An old woman was our guide, who led us over this isthmus, until our bones ached.—Three of us outstripped our companions; and finding they did not overtake us, I again left my two companions and climbed the pathless way, with intent to reach the summit, which I had missed. On nearly approaching the absolute perpendicular part of the cliff, I heard voices at the top, and hallooed, and soon found that the hindmost part of the company had climbed the place before me. The old woman descended to become my pilot, and the view paid amply for the labour. On the down-stream side of this bank of rock lies the place called the "New Weir," or a kind of artificial means of keeping up the river, and accommodated by a lock. Here we embarked again, and looked back on the scene with increased interest: for here, projecting from the usual run of this rocky hill, stands, almost detached, an upright tower of stone, very aptly termed the Cathedral, or the "Minster Rock,"—I forget which. It is square and grotesque, and vast in its proportions.

It was one of those charming days that gratify us with their serenity and peace: the clarionet sounded softly; yet the echo was perhaps the more enchanting. To describe all the beauties of the passage was not my intention, was I ever so capable. There was one circumstance, however, which was to me curious. I had heard when at Ross, that the fishermen on this river, still used the identical kind of boat which Cæsar has described in his Commentaries, as being used in his time by the natives of Britain; and I hoped for an

opportunity of being convinced of its truth. When drawing near to Monmouth, after passing Great Doward, and drinking at Martin's well, we came among some fishermen, who were disturbing the water with long poles to dislodge the salmon. To accomplish this, they occasionally used an infant kind of boat, which they carry with them in their large one; it holds but one person; is, as far as I can guess, not more than four feet in length; goes with the broadest end foremost; is worked by a paddle; has no keel or rudder; and is formed of wickers only, and covered by an oil-skin outside to repel the water. The man paddles himself on shore, jumps out, and takes his boat at his back with great ease. It had a strange and even laughable appearance; it was impossible to keep the mind at home; it would compare infancy with maturity, a "Corricle"[1] with the "Victory," and a Wye fisherman to Nelson.

After an uninterrupted day of rational enjoyment, we reached Monmouth, at half-past seven in the evening; eleven hours and a half on the water.

Monmouth (as the birthplace of Henry V.) may be considered as a high curiosity to the antiquarian; but as we were obliged, on account of meeting the tide in our way to Chepstow, to start at six the following morning, no great attention could be paid to the town. The place of his birth, the castle, is nearly all demolished. They have a noble statue of him over the market-house.

Left Monmouth at six in the morning, 19th.—The sun strove to overlook the steeps of wood that enclosed us in, skirting our misty and delightfully indistinct passage down the river. The day rose; the mists dispersed, and we met the tide just before we reached the village of Landauga, where the cottages rise one over the other, in a manner particularly pleasing, against the morning sun. The reach of the river, that commands

(1) Or Corracal.

the village of Landauga, exemplified in a striking manner that peculiar appearance, which we had noticed often on the water this morning, and the preceding day, viz. where the water was bounded by high ground, and at the same time *seemingly terminated* by as high or higher, it appeared to decline from the eye, and to lose its natural horizontal level, by running extremely down hill into the opposing eminence. We know that a river has in reality its natural declension; but this is a very strong and decided optical deception, and it pleased me not a little.

Through the long reach below Ethelsweir, the water became turbid and sluggish, until the tide turned, and then it ran furiously down, and soon brought us in sight of the ruins of Tintern Abbey; a place so often described by pen and by pencil, that I will not attempt it; only remarking that it must have been a place of extreme beauty, and is now an object that strikes the eye, and fixes on the soul something like the shackles of superstition. Yet I would hope that reverence for an old place of devotion, is something deserving a better name. The door was opened suddenly; and the effect instantaneously overpowered us all, in different ways; it is grandeur in a place where it is least expected; a memorial (of wealth and population) now unseen in its neighbourhood; the burial-place of Strongbow, the conqueror of Ireland, &c. Most of the party sat down and took sketches of the interior; but I found it above my reach, and so gave vent to my feelings by singing for their amusement and my own the 104th Psalm; and though no "fretted vault" remains to harmonize the sound, it soothed me into that state of mind which is most to be desired. We tarried here until the last minute of our allowance of time; the tide was ebbing; and if suffered to ebb too far, some of the rapids further down would not have boasted sufficient depth to have floated us to Chepstow. We took a hearty, but hasty breakfast; and I rather think the

Welsh girl who waited upon us was not sorry to get rid of her company. We had been more than three hours on the water; and we shall remember the Tintern breakfast with pleasure, if any part of our company go there, or meet each other again. Though in this latter part of our voyage, the water was not so lovely an object in itself, yet the grandeur of the scenery increased upon us every moment—the rocks called "Winlass-leap," and "Lover's-leap," and the more exalted eminence of Windcliff, in itself worth going a hundred miles to see—these, with the detached rocks, like buttresses, called the Twelve Apostles, and an infinity of minor beauties, made themselves admired and respected on either side, until we reached Chepstow castle and bridge; where we quitted the Wye with a regret, which those will best appreciate who have witnessed its power to enchant, and seen the objects in its course.

Arrived at Chepstow about one.—The castle of Chepstow stands on the bank of the Wye, immediately on the brink of a perpendicular rock of vast height. It appears to have been a fortress of uncommon strength. Here Martin the Regicide, as he is called, was long confined by Charles the Second, and one of the towers bears his name. Here each of the party found abundance of exercise for the mind and for the pencil; but having passed Windcliff in our way down the river, we now visited it by land, through the grounds of — Wells, Esq. of Persfield, pursuing a wooded walk for about two miles, immediately on the edge of the rocks which overhang the Wye. At nearly one end of this natural terrace, is the precipice called Lover's Leap, down which the eye descends with a fearful complacency, as a thick wood covers the bottom ground. They told us that its height was about sixty yards; I should guess it more. An iron railing protects the walk at top, and the descent is as steep as a wall. Windcliff, as seen by the map, is something further up

the stream, and is magnificently grand. The fantastic turns of the Wye, with its amphitheatre of woods, seemed diminished; but, if possible, increased in beauty. The Severn's mouth, the Holmes in its channel, the shipping at King-road, and all the country from below Bristol upwards, until Gloucester was lost in mist, is completely under the eye. It is here called the second view in England, and by Lord North was preferred to "Mount Edgecomb." The accompanying view of Windcliff is taken from a part of Chepstow Castle; and it will give an additional idea of its magnitude, if you observe that you do not see the river at its foot, but look over very high ground, round which the water comes from the right, towards the centre of the drawing.[1] If you look on the map from Chepstow Castle to Windcliff, the whole will be understood.[2] This drawing is done by R. B. Cooper, Esq. a principal in our party, who uses his pencil with great freedom and expedition: I prize it on his and every account.

We spent a delightful and social evening at the Beaufort Arms, Chepstow, and retired to rest, but not till we had walked to the castle by moonlight, where we found an owl hooting lustily from the battlements of Marten's Tower: we all stood to listen and admire, and certainly no imagination can form an object, and a scene, half so impressive.

Thursday, the 20th, at Chepstow.—The whole of this morning was spent in a thorough examination of the ruined castle, but the time was too short; many good drawings were made, and I attempted one amongst the rest. The joists of the floor in Marten's Tower are still existing, and are of solid oak, about a foot square. It appears unaccountable to me, how even by the lapse of ages, nutriment enough can be found for shrubs of so large a growth, as are flourishing between the outer

(1) Referring to a drawing taken on the spot.
(2) From Chepstow Castle to Windcliff the river crosses the line of sight four times.

and inner ramparts of these towers, and on the top of the wall of course. This gangway, once the place of the defenders of the fortress and its sentinels, is now an absolute wild: a mixture of bramble, hazel, ash, beech, and fruit-trees, from twenty to thirty feet high at least. The whole area of the chapel, which I was much taken with (though the man in attendance called it the banqueting-room), is covered with thriving underwood: the look-out from its large windows must have been almost dreadful, as that wall stands on, and is, in truth, a continuation of a perpendicular cliff, much higher than the building itself. The bridge at Chepstow is very narrow (belonging to the two counties), and the flooring is composed of oak planks only, on which both hoofs and wheels batter along in a singular manner: the planks are not fastened otherwise than at each end by an upright peg, on which, in case of high tides, they have room to lift up ten or twelve inches without losing their places.

Thursday, left Chepstow and the Wye, for Ragland and Abergavenny, and proceeded on to Ragland, where there is another immense castle, in some respects in better preservation than that we had left; but it has not so commanding a situation, and appears more like a baronial residence, than an impregnable fortress. Here is the largest growth of ivy I have ever seen. The whole compass of the walls is nearly complete; but I cannot possibly enter into particulars in a flying journal like this. We spent two hours amongst the ruins; and in a kind of cellaring, the arched way leading to which has partly fallen in, a countrywoman, who offered her services and information, informed us, that, when a light is carried in, it is soon extinguished, and that they say it is because of damps; but for her part she was inclined to believe, with many of her neighbours, that the devil was there. In this building a gigantic stem of ivy has pushed awry the fine fluted work of the kitchen window, and seems to set iron

and stone at defiance. The largest elm I have ever seen growing, is found in the yard or grounds of the castle.

We drove on for Abergavenny, where we arrived about nine at night, having the "Sugar-loaf Mountain," "The Skired-Vawr," and Blorench, catching the rays of the setting sun, as we came towards them. It was a noble sight.

Arrived at Abergavenny, nine at night, Friday, 21st. —I am now writing in my bedroom at Abergavenny, before breakfast, with the Sugar-loaf Mountain in view of my window, and before night we shall be on his brow.

I have now discovered that the hill I saw from my window is not the Sugar-loaf, but one of much inferior size. With ten in company, and three servants, it required some little order and contrivance to get us all up so rugged a way, and to such a distance. We found that as sociables and common carriages could not pass the narrow, stony, and precipitate lanes which lead up to the high ground, the best way would be to hire a carriage on purpose, that would carry half our party. We learned that a man in the neighbourhood was in the habit of carrying strangers to the top of the Sugar-loaf, and the Skired, and Blorench, &c., and that his conveyance was a common open cart, fitted up with occasional seats for the purpose, and drawn by three little scrambling ponies. The driver and owner is a red-faced little fellow, named Powel, who lives on his own small property, and is, perhaps, one of those we might call yeomen, or what in the north are termed statesmen. In this cart were stowed six of us; the rest rode single horses, chiefly fitted with side-saddles, for the accommodation of the ladies, who occasionally relieved each other. The cart was abundantly stored with provisions, wine, bottled ale, and fruit, and everything that could render the expedition agreeable and joyous. In this style, the whole cavalcade left the Angel Inn

at Abergany, and excited a great deal of mirth. The roads up the mountain are such as nothing could have passed, but a cart; brambles, honeysuckles, and hazel-nuts, rapped us on the head as we jolted up the courses of the winter's torrents, for every lane is a water-course. Blorench seemed to rise in greater sublimity, as we ascended the lower hills, or base of the Sugar-loaf. Skired Vawr was on our right, but the day was hazy, and the prospect not so extensive as it sometimes is. We reached the top of the woody part of this high ground, and then had a fairer view of the peak or summit of "Pen y Vale," which I understand to mean the "head of the vale," and which somebody has since baptized by the more melting name of the "Sugar-loaf." I here took to my feet, and steered directly for the summit, while most of the party went slowly round with the cart; but young Parnell Cooper rode his father's horse, amidst the rocks and fragments, almost to the summit, where the poor animal trembled and neighed for his companions. I gained the brow by regular and temperate exertion, for I had learned a lesson from Symmons' Yat, gathering whimburys or winberries in my way; and resting on the grotesque and immense fragments of rocks, which appear to have rolled down from the top; which is composed almost of entire rock, and is not a sharp, but a long narrow ridge, of about one hundred yards wide.[1] It was not possible to drive the cart to the top; so, while all the party climbed to the eminence, the driver took a circuit; and the servants relieved each other in the necessary duty of holding the horses, and enjoyed the scene by turns. We all sat on the soft green, or rather brown heath or ling; and from a spring, just below the rocky summit, had some excellent water. From this sublime eminence, the eye ranges over others still higher, and the blue mists hanging over the horizon, gave to the

(1) Cox's History of Monmouthshire calls it two hundred wide, by a quarter of a mile long; I think, from recollection, that it is not so much.

long line of intersecting mountains the appearance of a sea of hills. We had left beauty behind—here was nothing but sublimity; and I think that mirth would be the last feeling likely to be excited in such a situation. The air was remarkably fresh and invigorating; some few drops of rain fell, which were most likely not known in the country below. We left the summit with regret. At a considerable way from the more rocky part of the hill, in our descent, a cloth was spread on the moss beside a rivulet, the horses tied to a thorn, and the cold repast enjoyed with a mutual thankfulness, that is seldom found in a hall amidst the clattering of knives and plates. Again we mounted the Welsh sociable, and descended by another road, though, as to declivity, not a whit better than the other. We at length reached the turnpike-road to Abergany, and returned to the inn after an excursion, which having been long promised and expected, could hardly have been dispensed with, and which, from the universal gratification it gave, appears, now it is over, to have been a principal ingredient in our pleasures.

At Abergavenny, Saturday 22d.—This morning we strolled round the remains of Abergany Castle. It is very much gone to decay: but from the eminence where once stood the keep, the hill called Blorench, on the other side the river Usk, and the Pen-y-Vale hills, which we had ascended the preceding day, presented themselves in a new and magnificent point of view. The morning was inclined to be stormy, and the point of the Sugar-loaf, and great part of his sides, could not be seen. The clouds hung round him, and rolled in dark volumes about his stony girdle. We waited until the sun acquired more power, and saw his head emerge with all the majesty of a monarch.

Left Abergavenny at eleven.—This day's journey was to take us to Brecon, by way of Crickhowel; at the latter place refreshed by the way. Here likewise are seen some remains of a castle, and the ruins of an old

mansion, once belonging to the Earls of Pembroke. The people partake strongly of the Welsh character, and many of them cannot speak English. Three miles further on, turned out of the high road to see the remains of Tre-tower Castle, which stands rather singularly in a deep valley. Here an upright woman, a hundred years old, asked charity, and said her name was "Jane Edwards;" an old shoemaker answered in Welsh a great many inquiries, through an interpreter, his son, who could speak English, but roughly. From hence to Brecon was a most enchanting ride. Crickhowel mountain, and several others, were covered with clouds, that travelled along on their summits—and these clouds illuminated by the declining sun! And nearer to Brecon, the grotesque and abrupt cluster of points, called the Vann, were still more enveloped, in clouds of the most dark and terrific hue.

Reached the Golden Lion at Brecon, at nine, 22d. Mr. Morgan, the Recorder of Brecon, being related to Mr. C. of our party, we supped there, and next day, Sunday, 23, attended service at church; and heard some excellent voices in the organ-loft, full of simple pathos and feeling. The service is performed in Welsh, at three in the afternoon, for the accommodation of those who do not speak English; and another kind of accommodation is afforded the young men of the country, by the recruiting serjeants; they expose their bills of invitation, with their offer of eleven guineas bounty, in English and in Welsh, side by side. Who would lose a soldier by neglecting to let him know that you want him? Between the church and dinner hour, Mr. Lloyd Baker and self, on horseback, visited an old British intrenchment, so deemed, I believe, by the late Mr. King, the antiquarian. It consists of a triple bank, round the brow of a hill. And not more than three miles from Brecon, and on the same side of the town, at a farm now termed the Gaer, are the remains of a Roman wall, still so perfect as not to have wholly lost

the outer, or facing stones. This appears to have been a Roman station of some importance. Mr. Price, a very civil and intelligent farmer on the spot, gave us every information in his power, and seemed to enjoy it. A paved Roman road crosses his orchard, covered only by grass. A small lamp, found on the premises, is in the possession of Mrs. Price; and several very perfect Roman bricks are turned up by the plough, all stamped while the clay was wet, as the work of the second legion of Augustus.

In the wild bushy lane, leading down to the Gaer, stands a stone (perhaps five feet high, and three wide, by six inches thick,) called Marn Morinion, or the Maiden's Stone. It has had three lines of inscription, now so effaced, that Mr. B. could only make out a few words; but we learned that the whole is deciphered, and is in the possession of a gentleman of Brecon. In the front are two figures, once raised from the surface, but now battered away nearly to a flat. That on the right, appears to have been a Roman soldier, with the dress like a Highland philibeg, or petticoat; the other figure, I think, was a female; but the position of their arms is not to be made out; and though the figures in my sketch appear so very imperfect, I doubt they are too perfect rather, to be strictly just to the original.

A spot close in the neighbourhood of Brecon, called the Priory Groves, the property of Lord Camden, forms a beautiful walk for the town's people; a stream makes its way, over a number of rocky obstructions, in a deep valley below, keeping a continual murmur, though almost entirely hid by the trees.

Left Brecon Monday morning, 24th.—This day's journey was to take us to Hereford; we could not attempt to climb the Van Mountains in the neighbourhood, esteemed the highest in South Wales, and which, during our Sunday's ride and this morning's, were continually capped by clouds.[1]

(1) Price, the farmer, said he could almost to a certainty foretel rain, by the appearance of the clouds on the Van.

Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, in their own chariot, accompanied us as far as Hay, in the way to which town stand the remains of Bronyliss Castle, one tower of which is nearly perfect, except the floors. The walls of this tower are about eleven feet thick. The farmer on the spot makes use of it for a hay-loft; and he has destroyed great part of the other walls and ruins, to have the materials, to fence his yard, and build a stable. This formed a pleasing subject for the pencil, and my companions enjoyed it, during which, I was thinking of the river Wye, and filling my pockets with nuts. The Severn, and the Wye, both take their rise from the mountain of Plynlimmon. Hay, where we dined, stands on the Wye, and we felt a kind of unaccountable affection for the stream, which had, in its lower progress, given us so much pleasure. Here are likewise fine remains of a castle; and in the churchyard we observed a new grave, strewed with flowers; it is a Welsh custom, and they are often not strewn, but planted on the grave, and carefully weeded by the surviving friends of the deceased. In this case we only observed one sprig of sweet-brier growing; it was a beautiful, sad, and impressive sight, which will make me detest the unhallowed mob of bones in Bunhill fields more than I ever did before: let me be buried anywhere but in a crowd.

Here we parted with our Brecon friends, and proceeded onwards, passing, on the steep bank of the Wye, the poor remains of Clifford Castle, said to be the birthplace of Fair Rosamond. Crossed the Wye, a few miles further on, and then had it on our right, during an uninterrupted ride to Hereford.

At Hereford, Monday night.

During the whole ride the harvest was in all its glory. Orchards abound on each side of the road, and overhang the highway as plentifully as elms do in Suffolk; and the greatest crop is hanging on the trees that has been known for many years.

Hereford is a clean, lively city: we lodged at the

New Inn; and in the same house was residing the young Roscius, William Betty. He played Achmet on the evening of our arrival; but I declined a squeeze on so hot an evening. I saw him in the inn yard, in the morning; a well-made youth of about five feet six; a good, but surely not by any means an expressive, countenance. I beg his pardon if I am wrong. He mounted his horse with a kind of tol-de-rol gaiety, and galloped out of the yard.

The tower of the cathedral has a strange *squaddy* appearance; being exceedingly large, with turrets too small, and the height not according well with the proportion of the building.[1] The interior is elegant, and contains many very old monuments; but amongst the oddest particulars of this church, is the circumstance of its having two of the immense arches, under the tower, in the interior of the church, supported by an upright pillar, dividing at the top, so as to destroy the beauty of the arch, and make a singular appearance. These pillars are comparatively modern; and surely there must have been some other cause, not now apparent, to induce any architect to attempt so paradoxical a fancy, as to support an arch from beneath.

Left Hereford at eleven on Tuesday.

This day's journey was to take us from Hereford to the Malvern Hills; and Mr. L. B. having to call on his friend, Mr. Hopton, of Canfrone, part of the company drove on for Ledbury, where we proposed meeting again. Mr. Hopton has a house of no common sort. It is very large, and fitted up in the first style of elegance, not fantastically modern. Here we dined; and in the true spirit of old English hospitality, the venerable old 'squire asked if we liked good beer, and ordered the servant to bring a bottle of seventy-seven. I found that this beer was three years old when it was, at the

(1) Since writing the above, I have found the following memorandum in the "Tablet of Memory:" Hereford Cathedral nearly destroyed by the fall of its tower, September the 10th, 1786.

above date, put into bottles, and was consequently brewed when I was eight years old.

We joined our party at Ledbury, and proceeded on for Malvern Hills. Evening came on apace, and darkness overtook us as we crossed the hills, and turned to the left towards Malvern Wells. The road is but narrow, and runs on the side of the hills, giving us a starlight view of the descent below us, and of the eminence, not to say mountain, above. We reached the Well-house; but they were, with all their appendages, full of company; no beds could be had. Drove down to the town of Great Malvern, and received the same answer there: not even a sitting-room could be had for refreshment, except an offer, which was eventually declined, and which we learned was made by Sir Robert Staples, of the use of his rooms for an hour. It was eight miles further to Worcester, and now very dark, and the horses tired. Every effort was made to procure accommodations, which at last was accomplished, by procuring beds at private houses, &c. This caused more mirth than disappointment; for every one set out at first with a determination to be pleased. I lodged at a shop which was the post-office; and being debarred from the accommodating articles that wait upon my beard, I learned that I could be shaved by a man in the house, and so it proved: for the post-office man was the shaver, though I took him from weighing tea and cheese. He was a surly old fellow, a little on one side—and so was his house; for the flooring of my bedroom was more out of level than I ever slept on before: it was solid oak, and I dare say perfectly sound; though a large fracture (and there being no plaster below it) showed me the ostlers and maids at early breakfast below me. One of the ostlers snuffled a good deal in his speech; the other was a wit; and the maids (if they were such) were a tolerable match for them.

This morning, having no breakfast-room, had a table set in a garden; and the sun shining bright upon the

craggy hills just above us, made it a beautiful and singular scene. We took two saddle-horses for the ladies, and all together began to ascend the highest peak of old Malvern. It was laborious work. This majestic view has been many hundred times described, better than I can do it here; I will however remark, that the Malvern Hills are a range, that rise in comparatively a flat country, and therefore command an extraordinary view. Amongst the objects around, those which we deliberately observed, were, on the Welsh side, and turning round to the right, the Sugar-loaf, the Skired, the Black Mountains, the city of Hereford, Clay Hills, and the Wrekin in Shropshire. Windbury Hills, the Lickey, Hagley Park, Worcester city (eight miles), Malvern Abbey just below, the whole valley of Stratford-on-Avon (very distant), Bredon Hill, the long heights of Cotswold, Upton Bridge, down towards the Severn's mouth, and almost to the ocean! A ditch along the ridge of the hills marks the boundary between the counties of Gloucester and Hereford. I think, if I lived on the spot, I should climb the hills about twice a week, for six months, and then be able to give a tolerable account of the scene—delightful Malvern! I have said above that we *all* climbed the hill; but Mrs. Lloyd Baker, though she had reached the summit of Pen-y-Vale in a state, and far advanced, that "all women would wish to be who love their lords," was, I doubt, *deterred* from this attempt; for I am sure her spirit would *never* fail, if her reason approved. The old abbey church of Malvern reminds one of a man in a deep decline, and yet retaining about him all that can attest his former strength and vigour. The woman who exhibited what was there to be seen, was much better informed than many in a similar situation, and gave the most unaffected detail I have ever heard. The whole fabric is uncommonly damp and discoloured, and unless something is done to arrest the scythe of Time, the roof will soon be on the floor.

Left Malvern for Tewkesbury, Wednesday, one o'clock.—Leaving Malvern Hills, no other striking scenes presented themselves, except works of art, which though I affect not to disregard, I am not so much taken with, or able or willing to describe. From the summit of Malvern, we had observed Upton Bridge in the valley, and now passed it in the road to Tewkesbury. On entering the latter place, I was uncommonly surprised and delighted with the noble appearance of the streets; a width, and length, and clearness, and great respectability, that I had not been at all apprised of. Bury St. Edmund's I had always esteemed a fine clean town, but the street by which we entered Tewkesbury is at least twice, and at places thrice, as wide as Abbey-gate-street, and four times its length—a more respectable street than Holborn. The Stratford Avon, over which we passed, falls into the Severn at Tewkesbury. The Abbey Church has of late years been beautified [1] and repaired by Mr. Wyatt; and as to pulpit and seats, is the neatest that can be imagined. Prince Edward, son of Henry the Sixth, said to be murdered by Richard, after the battle of Tewkesbury, lies here in the centre of the church, with a small brass inscription. This evening was spent with peculiar pleasure, which we had been promised from our first setting out. Mr. R. B. Cooper had with him his manuscript poem (unfinished), in which he describes his neighbour, Stinchcomb Hill. He read it with very good effect, and it spoke most amply for its subject and its author. I hope some day to see it finished. Here likewise took place a general exhibition and comparison of notes and sketches, and much goodwill, with allowances for the bad, and enjoyment of the good.

(1) In the church books of Tewkesbury, which have been preserved for a long time back, are the following entries—"A.D. 1578, paid for the 'Players Geers' six sheep-skins for Christ's garments." And in an inventory recorded in the same book, 1585, are these words—"and order *eight heads of hair for the Apostles, and ten beards, and a face or visor, for the* DEVIL."
Monthly Mirror, 1807.

Left Tewkesbury, Thursday morning, for Gloucester, and home.

It was agreed to proceed this last day's journey by way of Cheltenham, and thence to Gloucester to dinner. Cheltenham appears to be an increasing town, full of dashing shops, and full of what is often called life, *i.e.* high life. I am not qualified to judge of high life, and may be laughed at for my strictures; but as I never feel happy in Bond-street, I see no reason that I should here. The visitors seem distressed for something to do, and I know of no calamity equal to it. I proposed calling on Dr. Jenner, who joined our party in the walks, and sent a Cheltenham gift for my wife, which shall remain in my family with his former tokens between us.

Spent about three hours at Cheltenham, and drove on for Gloucester, where we dined at three, at the King's Head. The Cathedral is beauty itself. Westminster is black and venerable—Canterbury is gigantic, and mixed in its beauties; but this, and particularly the tower, is a noble and lovely object. We look at it as we would at a beautiful woman, without cessation, and without tiring. Gloucester Cathedral is the burying-place of Robert of Normandy, and of Edward the Second, murdered at Berkeley. The city is fine, and is a busy scene, but I was more struck with Tewkesbury. From Gloucester we proceeded for home, which we reached about nine at night;

> Nor stopt till where we first got up
> We did again get down.

Dursley and Uley, as I have said already, are singularly beautiful as to situation. Yet such is the force of a set of new ideas, that the most cheerful individuals of the party now thought their beauties tame, because they were compared with what we had seen. I have imbibed the highest degree of affection for all the individuals of the party, from the most natural cause in the world—

because they all seemed glad to give me pleasure, and I shall forget them all,—when my grave is strewn with flowers.

R. BLOOMFIELD.

N.B. Before I left the country, visited Berkeley Castle, and gained much comparative information, from here observing a castle, still habitable and perfect, with all the characteristics of a castle which I had so repeatedly seen in a state of dilapidation. The room where Edward was murdered has a horrid kind of appearance. I returned to London by way of Oxford, and spent a day there, for fear I should never have such another chance. But to tell here of Oxford sights, great and highly interesting as they are, will never do. I leave the task to hands more methodical and more able, and return with delight to my humble home.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

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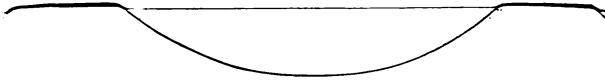

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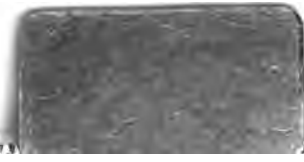
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